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LETTERS FROM ROME,

A. D. 138.

BY THE AUTHOR OF



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LETTERS FROM ROME,

A. D. 188.

T.

MARCUS SERTORIUS AT ROME, TO LUCIUS VIRGINIUS AT ATHENS.

You made me promise, my dear Lucius, when we parted company at Brundusium, to despatch you an occasional missive from the Great Metropolis; and I proceed accordingly to put reed to parchment, though I can't help thinking that you might have selected a far more sprightly and available correspondent.

Let me see—it's just a fortnight this very day, since we waved our final adieux, and you must needs, by this time, be safe and sound within the walls of the classic city, you and your loved ones. Well, how are you all? How's the dear Valeria,

and our charming little cousin Octavia? Quite recovered, I trust, from the effects of their winter voyage: to say nothing of those jolting roads of Macedon, so different from our own luxurious and stately Appian. I don't ask about Publius, taking it for granted that he is enjoying himself to the uttermost. I hope, by the way, that he is not neglecting his Journal, and that he will not neglect to avail himself, to the full, of the literary advantages of his new residence. A bright boy, that, Virginius, full of life, full of talent, but, between ourselves, a little too much given to frolicking. Keep an eye on him, I beseech you for all our sakes. I speak freely, my friend; but Jupiter knows, and you know, that it is out of pure love for the lad. You know, too, how often I have scolded my own indiscreet though not ill-meaning brother, Caius, for encouraging the voungster in his mad pranks, when he ought to have been setting him an example of diligence and sobriety. But no more on this head

You found the proconsul and his family well, I trust. That you were most cordially welcomed by them all, I cannot doubt; nor that, with such a friend and adviser as Sempronius by your side, the duties of your procuratorship will become alike agreeable and profitable. His Law Library, by the way, I am told, is by far the best to be found in the Provinces.

Of course, there is no great accumulation of news to tell you in the short interval since you left. On my way back to town I stopped at Capua, and spent a pleasant day at the villa of our mutual friend, Valerius. He was not so well as usual, having hardly recovered from a severe attack of inflammatory rheumatism. He received me most courteously, however, and chatted away with his customary cheerfulness and vivacity. When I entered, I found him reclining on his couch, listening to his daughter, a sweet, pretty girl, who was reading to him some choice passages out of his favorite Amicitia. Of course, I would not allow any interruption of the exercises on my account; and indeed, my friend, I hardly know which gratified me most, the text itself, so beautifully delivered by the lovely reader, or the admirable commentaries upon it, of our invalid philosopher. After a most delightful supper, the young ladies and myself adjourned to the gardens, the

evening being unusually mild, and graced moreover by a sunset, magnificent even for Campania. Our host thought it more prudent to keep within doors. V.'s superb monument to his wife, and the great crowning ornament of his villa, you will be pleased to learn, is at last completed, having received the finishing touches a few days since. It is indeed a princely work of art, and reflects the highest honor on young Eumenes, its designer. No palace or temple in Rome, that I wot of, can boast of columns more beautiful, or relief-work more expressive or appropriate. The inscription, V. tells me, has been somewhat freely criticised by some of his friends as being frigid, and as affecting a certain sententious brevity withal, not in harmony with the subject. It certainly is a very short one;

PORTIÆ VALERII. TANTIS VIRTUTIBUS NULLUM PAR ELOGIUM.

I confess, I rather like it, on the whole. A long string of names, titles, and attributes, occupying a score or two of hexameters, would, to my mind, only have defaced the monument; and as to the alleged want of tenderness, I cannot see it. However, I never was much of an epicure in epitaphs, and so I leave the point to be settled by your own better judgment.

My foot had not been three seconds across my own threshold, when I was saluted with ten thousand eager inquiries from both Julia and Marcellina, concerning the dear absentees, and all the particulars of their embarkation. M.'s tongue, especially, ran for a full half hour with unprecedented velocity. Tell Octavia that I did not fail to deliver either her messages or her kisses. As soon as I had satisfied their curiosity, I went over to your house, where I found every thing in perfect order, and old Titius as crusty as ever. I shall not neglect your instructions concerning it, should a tenant of the right sort present himself.

The great topic of the town, as it was indeed before your departure, is the declining health of the Emperor. He certainly looks very badly. I had a glimpse of him yesterday, on his way to the Senate House, where he made a very brief, and, I am told, most unsatisfactory visit. His remarks were incoherent, and his whole manner wild, and

almost savage. His doctors are pleased to call his disease, dropsy: a sufficiently formidable one, certainly; but I can't help thinking that there are other difficulties within, even more threatening, that will, I fear, bid defiance to all their skill, and compared with whose ravages, death itself would be a perfect boon. This is a delicate subject to speak of, my friend, I know, but in what other way can we explain the strange language and deportment of the Emperor, and the still stranger edicts that have recently issued from the Palatine? indeed, when I consider the many long years of incessant activity and excitement, the perpetual wear and tear, both of mind and body, that he has gone through with, my only wonder is that reason has not surrendered the citadel long since. I may exaggerate the matter, perhaps; but I repeat it, my friend, I shall be very much surprised if Hadrian is ever a sound man again, nay, if he ever sees another birthday.

Yesterday, by the way, was his first appearance in public, for the last ten days; all which time he has been locked up in his Tiburtine villa, in gloomy seclusion, neglecting entirely all affairs of state, and obstinately denying himself to every one but his favorite Verus; ves. Verus, that abominable spendthrift and debauchee. Is it not lamentable that one so utterly worthless, should have acquired such an ascendency in the Imperial councils? Nay, it is even rumored that the Emperor has already designated him to the Senate, as his successor. Ye Gods, avert it! us the scandal, the disgrace of such a ruler! But I cannot believe it. 'Twas but this very morning, Lucius, that I saw the wretch, reeling along the Suburra, with a vile crew of buffoons and strumpets at his heels. A more bloated and disgusting mass of humanity I never beheld. And to think that only two little years ago, this same Verus was pointed out in the streets, as one of the handsomest and most brilliant of our Roman gentlemen t

The Emperor's estrangement from his wife, I am sorry to say, still continues, and with no prospect whatever of a reconciliation. She, like the noble-spirited and injured woman that she is, takes high ground, and will listen to no terms that will compromise in the slightest degree, her dignity or

honor. Such is the purport of her letter to the Senate; a document that does her infinite credit, but which, I fear, will only widen the breach more than ever. Hadrian's indomitable pride will never surrender, least of all, to a woman. Heaven only knows how the affair will end: Some frightful tragedy, I fear, will yet grow out of it.

To say truth, my friend, I do not see any very bright prospects ahead, in the political world. You may call me croaker, if you will, but so it is. Yes, I confess it, the bare thought that Rome may be so soon visited with a repetition of the horrors and atrocities of a Nero or Domitian, (for is this miscreant, Verus, one whit better?) fills me with But can the Gods be so merciless? can Romans be so abject as to bow down before a beast like this? I must not, will not believe it. Meanwhile, all things look bright and flourishing without; neither the troubles of the Court, nor the maladies of the Emperor, would ever be guessed at by the passing stranger. Never were our streets more gay and brilliant, our theatres and amphitheatres more thronged; there was not a seat to be had in the Colosseum, yesterday, for love or money.

So they tell me, at least; for, as you know, I am not very partial to such places; hardly ever going, indeed, except to gratify Julia, or the youngsters. I sometimes wish it were otherwise, but I am too old to change now, my friend, and shall probably continue to the end, the same quiet, studious body that you have known me, any time for the last twenty years; vibrating steadily between my own house and the Ulpian, taking my occasional ride to Tibur or Laurentum, my daily walk in the Esquiline Gardens, and after supper, preferring, with very rare exceptions, the quiet, good hours, and endearments of home, to all the festivities and dissipation of this overgrown, wicked metropolis. Am I not right, after all?

I was quite surprised and delighted, by the way, the other morning, at seeing your bust in the Palatine Library, and in such a post of honor, too; right under the illustrious Pollio himself. How came you to keep the matter so secret? Sheer modesty, I suppose. There is but one opinion here, among your friends, both as to the propriety of the compliment thus paid you, and the perfect fidelity of the work. It is, indeed, a most capital

likeness; brow, mouth, eyes, admirable, even to the very trick of your frown. The librarian is quite enthusiastic about it.

There has not been much stirring in the literary world, since you left. The latest publication on the table of the Ulpian, is the Discourse of Procu-He calls it the Lexicon and the Rationarium: being the same that he delivered not long since, before the Tusculan Society of this city, and, as its title indicates, an avowed reply to that brilliant oration of our reverend friend Flaminius, which we heard some six months ago before the same society, and with which we we were all so charmed. You. in particular, I remember, expressed yourself most warmly upon the occasion; at the same time, you thought some of brother F.'s ideas rather paradoxical, or at any rate, better suited to the meridian of Alexandria or Athens, than to that of Rome. The attempt itself, indeed, to elevate business at the expense of literature, in our Roman education, and to compel the scholar to give the wall to the merchant, in the walks of social life, was alike bold and novel, nor could all the eloquence of the speaker, or the fervid glow of his language, or the abundance and felicity of his illustrations, succeed in making it appear practicable to a Roman audience. No, no; the tide has set quite too strong the other way, ever since the days of Romulus, to be stemmed now, by all the arguments or the rhetoric of all the schools. The mercantile calling never has been, never can be looked upon by us Romans, as one leading either to renown in the state, or influence in society. Unreasonable as the prejudice may be, it has taken altogether too deep a hold on the popular heart, ever to be rooted out of it.

And yet, though Proculus thus had all the weight of authority, and the sympathies of his hearers, on his side, he has made a most feeble and lame reply; one not to be named in the same century with the performance of his antagonist. Indeed, I cannot find a single passage in it worth transcribing for you.

"Ah, if brother F. had only replied to himself on this occasion! That would have been a treat." So whispered Sempronius to me, I remember, at the time we were dozing over the delivery of this same bundle of commonplaces.

Yes, indeed-for he is one of those gifted fel-

lows, who can talk alike fluently and delightfully, on all sides of all subjects; ay, and carry us all along with him, nolentes volentes, by the fascinating music of his voice, and the contagious energy of his manner; whereas you know far better than I do, that there is not one particle of thunder and lightning about our amiable friend Proculus. You may think me severe, perhaps, but I must out with it; and between ourselves, I consider the publication of his discourse, a most injudicious appropriation of sheep-skin.

A new version of Antisthenes, by Fulvius, has caused a good deal of talk lately, among the critics. He has certainly acquitted himself well, and transferred all the pith and vigor of the original to his pages. But this author, I confess, is no favorite of mine. His acidity, and skepticism, and perpetual flings at human nature, are not at all to my taste.

A most superbly illuminated edition of Tibullus has just appeared. It is published by the Fratres Carvilii, and was intended by them, at first, as a Gift Book for the last Saturnalia, but owing to the recent fire at their establishment, the publication has been unavoidably postponed. It is to be had, they tell me, at Eudemus's, and indeed, of all the respectable booksellers of Athens. You will find it a gem of the first water, I assure you.

I have been, since my return, to the studio of Apollonius, where I have gazed with unalloyed delight, on his noble statue of Vespasian. There is an ease, simplicity, dignity about it, most captivating. All Rome is emphatic in its praise, as a masterpiece, worthy of the palmiest days of Greece. It is quite finished, and will be removed shortly to its destination, in the portico of the Temple of I should myself have preferred seeing it in the centre of the magnificent rotunda; and such, indeed, is the Prefect's own opinion; but the Emperor's orders, he says, are most explicit and peremptory on the point, and we must, of course, submit. Our friend Fabius's long delayed picture of the Capture of Jerusalem, which you were so anxious to see, before leaving town, has at length been exhibited, and I regret to say, has met with but a cold reception. It is not considered a great work. The coloring, indeed, is brilliant and harmonious, and the groups are well composed; but there is a sad want of invention about it, and above all, of that poetic feeling so necessary, to relieve and humanize a scene, in itself so painful and repulsive. Such, at least, is the verdict of the most competent critics, and in my humble opinion, it is a just one.

But it is high time for me to bring this rambling epistle to a close; more especially as Julia intends writing your wife, by the same opportunity. Don't fail to make my most respectful remembrances to the Proconsul, and all under his hospitable roof. And now, my dear friend, may Minerva ever bless you, and aid you in the duties of your new office. Farewell.

H.

JULIA TO VALERIA.

I NEED not tell you, dearest Valeria, how anxious we are to hear from you all, and of your safe arrival. Is it possible that it is almost a month since you left us? Pray, how did you stand the voyage? What sort of accommodations did you have on board the Hercules? Were you and Octavia spared the horrors of sea-sickness? And the land journey, how was it? Are the roads and inns of Epirus so abominable as travellers represent them? And are you, indeed, safely landed at last, in Athens, and have you found kind friends and pleasant faces to greet you? I shall not rest easy, my dear child, till I have got full and explicit information from you, on all these points. Well, your letters must certainly be here, now, very shortly, and our minds will then be relieved.

You can't tell how much I miss you, and your

excellent husband, and the pleasant prattle of dear Octavia. Your house, too, once so cheerful and lively, it positively gives me a chill, as I go by it, so changed, so desolate is it. I almost wish, at times, (forgive me for saying it,) that the Emperor would yet revoke Virginius's appointment, so vexed am I, at being thus defrauded of your society.

You will be glad to hear that we are all well; all but little Tanaquil, who suffers a good deal from her teething. I must do the child the justice to say, by the way, that she behaves beautifully in her troubles; far better than her brothers and sisters did before her. Indeed, if she keeps on as she begins, she will be, by all odds, the most amiable and ornamental member of the family. Marcellina has this moment entered the room, from a game of romps with her uncle Caius. She was talking this morning very emphatically, about sending a few lines to her little Athenian cousin, but I fear the matter will end there.

I am sorry to inform you that our neighbor, Cornelia, has met with a sad disappointment, her dear little boy only living five minutes. Poor thing! this is the third time she has been served thus. And what do you think that reprobate Caius said, when I told him of it? "Five minutes? What a pilgrimage!" He then added, "I take it for granted, sister, that there are no entries made in the heavenly books, in such cases." He is always making just such absurd speeches. I understood him; not so, however, our sober, literal-minded friend Tullia, who happened to be by at the time. She looked perfectly thunderstruck. So unbecoming! so irreverent! Had old father Pluto himself, suddenly risen through the floor, trident in hand, and forthwith claimed Caius as lawful prize, she would have thought it a just judgment upon him, I dare say.

Poor woman! I needn't tell you that she is the same solemn, fun-eschewing, morbidly conscientious creature as ever; always manufacturing new cares and duties, always moaning over past delinquencies; cross-examining every motive, analyzing every sensation, setting up continually an utterly impracticable standard of conduct, and of course continually exacting the most unreasonable demands, alike from herself, and from all about her. Every thing must be just so, forscoth, or all is lost! If she be not

the very first woman on the ground at the Matronalia, if she miss a solitary morning from her devotions at the temple of Vesta, or make the most insignificant blunder in repeating her vows after the priest, or swerve the veriest hair's-breadth from the orient, in performing her genuflexions, or if the children are out of bed one second behind the sun, or the breakfast does not strike the table at the very turn of the hour-glass, she is necessarily and supremely wretched for the rest of the day.

I confess, I get terribly out of patience with her, at times, for taking life so very hard, and for presuming to be so absurdly exemplary. Don't misunderstand me, though, my dear friend. I believe in conscience, and in its jurisdiction; but I do not believe in holding court continually, still less in taking up its time with every paltry trifle. Let that tribunal, like all others, have its appropriate adjournments, nay, vacations, if you will. This persistent and unseasonable casuistry, what good end does it Meanwhile, we are defrauding ourselves answer? of all the legitimate pleasures of life; meanwhile, the perfume is fading from the rose, the splendor from the heavens, and we are enjoying them not.

No, no, Valeria, no such philosophy for me. I have no faith whatever, either in this perpetual self-questioning and self-distrust, or in this eternal tinkering with the manners and morals of our neighbors. I consider it alike ungrateful to the Gods, and a reflection on their wisdom. Far better to take human nature as they have compounded it, and human life as the many-colored web that they have woven it; for their own good ends, no doubt; which, in their own good time, they will reveal to us.

I mustn't be too hard on Tullia, though; for with all her peculiarities, no better-intentioned creature, I believe, ever trod Jove's earth. She would not willingly bruise the wing, no, nor scowl upon, the veriest fly. Ah, Valeria, the longer I live, the more and more convinced am I of the impropriety of hastily condemning, or criticising those about us; the more and more precious seem to me, every hour, those golden maxims of our great teacher, Scorates: Bear and forbear, Forgive and forget, Judge not, and above all, and including them all, Love one another.

"But a truce to these commonplaces, Julia; haven't you any news to offer a body?"



Well, not much, my dear. For what little there is, too, I must refer you to Marcus's letter to your husband, which he read over hurriedly to me this morning. He speaks pretty gloomily in it, you will perceive, of the future, and of troubles brewing I can't help thinking that he exaggerat Court. ates the matter somewhat. My principal Court authority, you know, is Vitellia, who, in turn, gets most of her information from her kinsman, Antoninus, who of all men in Rome, ought to be well acquainted with political matters; and he says distinctly, that though he docs feel a good deal of anxiety about the Emperor's health, he does not, in any event, anticipate the least commotion in the city, or in any part of the Empire. As to our dear Empress, he thinks she has been somewhat too hasty in the expression of her feelings, and that, with a little prudence, a compromise may be brought about, alike honorable to both parties.

Meanwhile, as Marcus says (no great authority, by the way), the metropolis was never gayer, nor the streets more crowded with well-dressed people, and brilliant equipages. Balls, masquerades, concerts, serenades, entertainments of all sorts are going

on continually, all over town. There was a grand Military Ball, a day or two ago, given in honor of the Prefect's wife, by the officers of the Fifth Legion, which, they say, was more splendid than any thing of the kind ever known in Rome. Your friend was honored with an invitation, but did not Nor, indeed, did she look upon it as any great deprivation. To say truth, Valeria, I am wonderfully changed from the gay, giddy creature that I was, when you first knew me. A decade of years has worked a sad revolution within me; that, and the cares and duties of motherhood, and, above all, my association with such a dear old sobersides of a Poor Marcus! husband. He hugs his hearth and his books closer than he ever did: even a triumphal procession hardly brings him to the window, now. All my scolding is of no use; he is positively beginning to lose the run of his own relations. to the neighbors, they might as well be in Abyssinia, so far as any interchange of civilities is con-To-morrow is the day of his annual visit at Court, which, you know, he cannot, in common decency, neglect; and I can see, though he won't own it, that he looks upon it as a most terrible un-



dertaking. Even the play-house, which he was once so fond of, has become a bore to him. I was quite anxious to go the other day to Pompey's theatre, to see the new tragedy of Germanicus, which has created so much sensation in town. The scenery, Vitellia tells me, is perfectly magnificent. But on broaching the subject to M., he looked so distressed about it, that I abandoned the idea at once. Indeed, so strangely altered is he in this regard, that I verily believe that he sets more value to-day on a single page of his musty Plato, than on all the plays or Circensian games that have been given in Rome since the Tarquins.

And then he is becoming so absent-minded, too! The other day, at supper, I was asking him a question about some household matter, and what, think you, was his reply? Nothing less than a long extract from Pliny's Panegyric. I positively had to thump him, to bring him to himself. Then the poor man so blushed, and stared and stammered, that even old Davus, thorough-bred slave that he is, had to stuff his napkin in his mouth, to preserve his composure. The other evening, too, as we were walking with little Rufus in the Campus Martius,

M. could hardly be kept from plunging into the river, so lost in thought was he; I dare say, he was at the very time investigating with his mind's eye, the sources of the Indus. But I mustn't abuse the dear soul; for with all his oddities, he is the most gentle and tender-hearted of all Jove's creatures. You will be pleased to learn that he is coming on finely with his historical researches. The first vollume of his work, he says, will probably be ready by about the Ides of August. It brings him down, if I understood him rightly, to the year of the city, 100; the good old days of King Tullus; those honest, old-fashioned, primitive days, whose praises Marcus is for ever chanting; when Tyrian tunics, and Sicilian cooks, and Britannic oysters were alike undreamed of; when our blessed grandmothers used to slaughter their own chickens, and the conscript fathers chop their own wood; when leaguelong porticoes still slumbered in their quarries, and historic columns lived only in the visions of architects; when all Rome itself, indeed, might have been stowed away in a single tier of the Colosseum. Blessed old times, to be sure! I very much fear, my dear, that at the rate at which the good man is

now going, he will not be spared, to bring his work down to our own wicked era.

But I am chattering away here, without the slightest regard, either for your patience, or my own parchment. A poor return, this, for the letters which I expect from you, giving full accounts of all the fashions, notabilities, lectures, art-doings, and antiquities of Athens. I can't help envying you, at times, my dear Valeria, I confess. it is the fashion for us spoiled children of this overgrown metropolis, to affect to sneer at and decry all provincial towns, and to see nothing worth living for, beyond the sound of the trumpets of the Capitol. And so it is, no doubt, to the mere flirt, or fop, or epicure: to the votaries of such false and hollow pleasures, a residence in Achaia, would be little better than banishment; but for us, who pretend to have some little sensibility in our compositions, some lurking love for the beautiful, and reverence for the all-glorious past, a visit to the old homestead of Art and Philosophy, how can it be otherwise than delightful and profitable?

Tell Octavia, by the way, that if she fails to

keep a full and complete record of her Greek experiences, and to submit it also to her cousin Julia's inspection, I shall pass her by most ingloriously, next Sigillaria. Bless me, what an important little body she will be, when she returns; and such a Hellenist! Seriously though, Valeria, don't let her fail to perfect her Greek accent, now she is at the head-quarters of the pure Cecropian. I hear so much frightful gibberish, under that name, every day, in our shops and markets, that I am quite sensitive upon the point.

While I think of it, you were right in your conjectures concerning our friend Aurelia's marriage. Young Sabinus is, indeed, the happy man. The day has been named, and to-morrow the parties are to meet at her father's, to settle the marriage-articles. But this is quite enough, Valeria, for one sitting; besides, it is getting late, and the writer is growing sleepy. And so Marcellina has managed to scratch off a few lines, after all. I ask the dear child's pardon, and duly inclose her missive.

Juno bless you, my darling. Farewell.

III.

MARCELLINA TO OCTAVIA.

I AM sure, dear coz, that you will not be sorry to get a few lines from your old playmate, if it is only to tell you how I do long to see you, and to have a nice bit of talk together. Bless me, it seems a thousand years since you left. What fine times you must be having, to be sure! Well, my turn will come, some of these days, I suppose; if not sooner, at any rate, when I get married, and have a nice little husband all to myself. we take an extensive Asiatic tour then, though? Won't I spend his money for him, too? eh, Oc.? But I forgot. What would Pa say to that last speech? Well, coz, I've no great news to tell you, after all. Things are going on pretty much as when you left, both at home and at school. Our Geography teacher, by the way, hasn't made his

appearance for some days; that horrid, ugly old fellow, I mean, that you took such a dislike to: the same that Uncle Caius called the learned pig. Ha, ha, ha! learned pig; what a funny man Uncle Caius is! Little Rufus, you must know, goes to school with me now, every morning. He is a downright bright little fellow, and a real pet among the girls. I make him hear my grammarlesson regularly, before we leave home, and I hear him his Viri Romæ. How he does rattle it off ! Though he's the smallest boy in his class, the master says he'll soon be head, at the rate he's going. Yesterday being Camillus's birth-day. there was no school, of course. Aunt Tarquinia called in the morning, and took Mother and me out to her country-seat, where we had a right nice time. Oh how I wish you could have seen the bouquet she gave me when we came away. It was the most perfect love of a thing I ever saw. I wonder if you have any such roses at Athens. I doubt it.

Let me see; I think it was the very day after you left, that we had that children's party, at mother's friend, Lavinia's; I mean the flamen's wife. Such a pleasant party as it was, too! Lots of little folks, and first-rate music; two lyres, two harps, and five flutes; think of that, Octavia! I don't know how many sets I danced. Then we had shawl-dances, and basket-dances, and the new Lydian dance, winding up, at last, with a real oldfashioned Etrurian jig. And then, such a supper! Such quantities of bong-bongs, as cousin Remus always calls them! Sicilian mottoes, and Spanish kisses, and those delicious Sardinia sugar-plums, that you used to buy for me, at Piso's. Oh, how I' wished you were with us. The dear old flamen, too, what a pretty book he gave me; with such nice pictures in it. It is called The Doll and her Friends; one of the sweetest, drollest things you can imagine. Dolly tells all her adventures, and describes all sorts of children and grown folks. was so tickled with it, that I read it all over a second time, to my own doll, your little pet, Dido; and it really seemed to me as if the young thing relished it as much as I did, and opened her little glass eyes wider than ever. Poor Dido, she hasn't had her usual spirits for the last day or two. Uncle Caius examined her this morning, and said he feared that her hip-joint was seriously affected. He seemed to think that hot bathing might be of service to her.

By the way, Octavia, Mother took us all, the other day, to see the Fat Woman. Of all the curious, funny exhibitions I ever beheld, this is the Why, the Mammoth Sow is a plaything alongside of her. Nine hundred and sixty-two pounds Roman, as I'm a sinner. It positively took me two minutes by the water-glass to walk round Little Sabina, who was with us, actually proposed, naughty child, to play tag round her. old creature grinned, and said she had no objections; but the proprietor was decidely opposed, he said, to any such goings-on. In reply to Mother's questions, he informed us that she was sixty years of age; that she hailed from Campania; that she hadn't seen her toes since she was weaned; that her temper was uniformly good; that she came up to the metropolis on speculation, and in a vehicle made expressly for her; that they changed horses every half mile, and travelled at the rate of a mile every two hours; he said, finally, that the exhibition just about paid expenses.

There is another exhibition in town, that I mean

to tease father's life out of him till he takes me to see it; and that's the Sleeping Man. Sabina has been, and told me all about him. He never wakes up, she says, except on the Kalends; then he rubs his eyes, looks round, groans a little, and presently calls for chicken broth, the only article they can induce him to taste. After taking down a bowl or two, which, of course, they always have ready against the day comes round, he turns right over, and goes to sleep again, and nothing more is heard from him, till the next new moon, when he goes through precisely the same routine. Sabina says there is no humbug about it; and that when she was there, she stuck a pin in him, up to the head, and that he didn't mind it any more than if he had been a pin-cushion. Isn't it curious? What the Gods make such queer creatures for, is a mystery to me. I was asking father that very question, by the way, the other morning. "Ah, my child," said he, "any youngster can ask about these things, but Pythagoras himself (I think he said Pythagoras) can't shed any light upon them."

But you'll begin to think it high time for me to stop my nonsense. Well, well, I'll be through,

soon. Have you finished Phædrus yet? Isn't he sweet? Mother has been giving me such a lovely hymn to Minerva, to learn lately. She says if I'll only learn it nicely, and repeat it prettily to her in the evenings, before going to bed, that I shall positively take lessons on the harp, next quarter. Think of that! lessons on the harp! The Gods give us joy! the Gods give us joy!

Another thing has happened, by the way, since you left, and I wonder I didn't mention it before; and that is, that our dear little terrier, Julia, has just had four of the funniest, cunningest little pups you ever saw. It would do your heart good to see them squealing and tumbling about the house, and above all to witness the airs of their interesting mamma. Uncle Caius has named them, already; such names, too; Coriolanus, Ancus Martius, Sardanapalus, and the fourth, a little female, Sarsaparilla. "And who, in Pluto's name, was she?" asked Pa. "What," said Uncle, "is it possible you never heard of Sarsaparilla, so long the reigning beauty at the Court of Artaxerxes?" And without waiting for an answer, he turned right round to the pups, and began to read

them a lecture. What a lecture, Octavia! earnest, so solemn! He trusted that they would be good children; that they would not worry the kittens, or eat up the mocking-bird; but obey their dear mother in all things; and so grow up to be exemplary dogs, and ornaments of the canine community. It would be a pleasure to him, he said, to superintend their education, and to try to set them up in life. If they behaved well over their bones, and carried their baskets faithfully, he would show them where the best butchers' meat was to be had for the stealing, and where the rats were thickest, when they wanted sport. He would also try to teach them odd and even, and the twelve tables, and other domestic games, so suited to long winter evenings. He went on in this way for some time, the youngsters all nodding their little bits of heads, and wagging their little bits of tails together, till suddenly they with one accord all scampered off to their dinner. Oh dear me! what a droll man Uncle Caius is, to be sure! Mother says I mustn't take him too literally, though. She says, too, that he is altogether too much given to mystification. Mystification? I am not quite sure that I know what that long word means. Never mind, though; it helps fill up my parchment. By the way, what do you think of that last flourish? Pa says, my penmanship is very peculiar.

Minerva love us, what an absurd letter this is t But I won't pester you any more, this time, coz. Best love to Publius, and to all your little Greek cronics, and so, vale carissima.

2.

IV.

SERTORIUS TO VIRGINIUS.

Your letters, my dear Lucius, have at length reached us, announcing your safe arrival at Athens. We were all right glad to hear that you had so comfortable a journey and such agreeable fellowtravellers; and above all, that Valeria is so well pleased with her new friends and new quarters. I was sure that she would be most warmly received by Sempronius and his charming family. By the way, Lucius, while I think of it, what a glorious burst of enthusiasm that was, in your letter, where you speak of your first sight of the Acropolis! It was really delicious to see you stirred up so. So different from the affected raptures, the cut-anddried hyperboles of your ordinary travellers; so genuine, and hearty, and genial, withal! It fairly brought the tears to my old eyes, I assure you,

And so you do not expect to find the duties of your new office very onerous, thanks to the skill and diligence of your predecessor. I am delighted to hear it, my dear friend, and that you will thus have abundant leisure for those studies and recreations, so congenial to your taste.

I have little news to tell you, since my last epistle. The Emperor's health is reported as improving; to quiet the public mind, doubtless. At least, so it seems to me. I was present, as in duty bound, at the Reception on New Year's day; and though Hadrian certainly had none of that wild look, of which I have before spoken, and indeed, went through the presentation ceremonies with his accustomed grace and urbanity, there was, nevertheless, a pallor and languor about him, and a tremulous uncertainty in his tones, ordinarily so clear and musical, that, I confess, made a most painful impression upon me. He looked, in truth, like a man whose days were numbered. This may, indeed, be a mere whim of my own; Jove grant that it is so; especially with such prospects as we have in the way of a successor; but, I say it again, my friend, I shall be very much astonished, if he ever lives to see another New-Year's.

He leaves to-morrow for his villa at Baiae, his physicians earnestly insisting upon it. Perhaps the more genial air and comparative tranquillity of the place, may help him somewhat. As to the waters, I never had much faith in them, myself; certainly not in such critical cases as His Majesty's. only vesterday, by the way, that I was talking about these same waters, with our bilious, irritable neighbor, Pætus. Mehercule, what a queer fellow he is ! He abused them most lustily; remarking, in his usual grotesque and impassioned style, and with that deep bass voice of his, that he had been drenching and soaking himself with them, at all times and temperatures for the last thirty years, without deriving the slightest benefit from them whatever; that the whole system of thermopathy, in his opinion, was one stupendous quackery, and contrivance for putting denarii into the pockets of doctors and inn-keepers; and so forth, and so following. He kept on in this style for a good half hour, rolling his r's fearfully, waxing more and more red and wrathy continually, and concluded, at length, with a most frightful volley of maledictions. Poor Pætus!

You will be grieved to hear of the death of the priestess Laurentia. Valeria knew her well, I be-Hers is indeed a sad loss, not only to her family, but to all Rome. There never was a Vestal Virgin, they say, more universally revered and beloved, throughout the city. Had she lived but two days longer, Julia tells me, she would have exactly completed her thirty years' ministry. Her health, it seems, has been quite delicate for some months past; notwithstanding which, however, she has been entirely devoted to the duties of her office, and to her usual round of charities. At the time of her death, she was especially interested in the organization of a Children's Aid Society, always a favorite project of hers; and had even gone so far as to submit to the Pontifical College, a plan of her own devising, for its construction. I have not seen it myself, but Rutilius tells me that it is an admirable one; as practicable, he thinks, as it is ingenious, and that it will undoubtedly be adopted by the college. He went on to speak of Laurentia in the most glowing terms. He knew of no woman, who combined such masculine strength of understanding and energy of purpose, with such feminine gentleness and refinement; so learned, too, so accomplished, and above all, so devoted to the happiness of others; always going about doing good, feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, ministering unto poor foundlings and drunkards and lunatics; a welcome guest, alike at palace and cottage; as pure and lovely in her private relations, as she was superb and majestic in the imposing ceremonies of our religion. I repeat his language thus fully, as I am confident that both Valeria and yourself will indorse every word of it. Well, she is gone; taken from us in the prime of life, and in the midst of her beneficent labors; translated, who can doubt it, my friend, to a higher and nobler theatre of action; nearer and dearer than ever, to those Gods, whom through life, she so revered and obeyed.

Notwithstanding her numerous charities, she has left a very large estate. Her bequests, both public and private, are indeed munificent; among others, one to the Empress, as an evidence of her attachment, and a testimony to her many virtues; a testimony not to be shaken, in my poor judgment, by the voices of a whole Colosseum full of fawning courtiers, or hireling scribblers.

The funeral solemnities were performed yester-day. I saw a part of the procession. It was very imposing, and the music grand. The oration by her kinsman, Regulus, I am told, was very able and touching; hardly a dry eye in the Forum. I regret now that I did not hear it, but to tell the truth, my friend, I have a daily growing aversion to crowds and out-door excitements. I anticipate great pleasure, however, from the perusal of the manuscript.

The last novelty in the literary world, is the Lotophagesis of young Fabricius (the son of our popular Quaestor), which appeared a few days since. I have just finished it, and have been quite charmed with it. It is, as the title delicately intimates, a series of reminiscences of visits to some of the most remarkable of the lakes, mountains, rivers, waterfalls, and watering-places of the Empire; made up mostly of descriptions of scenery, with occasional criticism on Art, and not a few most felicitous hits at the follies, vices, shortcomings both as to knowledge and manners, and indeed, the general false life of our Roman fashionables, as seen upon their travels; the whole richly inlaid with genus of verse, some, of the author's own

composition, but mostly taken from the glorious bards of the Augustan era. When I add, that the margin of the volume is copiously adorned with appropriate designs from the magical pencil of Scribonius, I am sure I shall create in you a most keen appetite for it; and indeed, I shall make it a point to send it to you, the moment Julia has got through with it. The very first chapter, I am sure you will be delighted with; wherein the author runs a parallel between the Danube and the Nile; setting forth the characteristic attributes and associations of the two rivers, with a force, and at the same time, a delicacy of discrimination, truly admirable. We next find him among the Alban hills, with a fine description of a storm, and the effect thereof on the beautiful falls of the Anio; a hackneyed theme, certainly, but treated with marvellous freshness, and rare felicity of language. He then takes us to the falls of the Velinus, where he sets forth, both in verse and prose, all the wonders of that 'matchless cataract, horribly beautiful,' as old Ennius calls it; he explores it by day and night, in calm and tempest, in short, under every possible variety of atmospheric effects: now he revels amidst its innumerable diamonds and emeralds; now he is borne madly along its waves, as

"The giant element
From rock to rock leaps with delirious bound;"

now he dwells with rapture on the tranquil splendor of its rainbow, which, as he finely says,

"while all around is torn

By the distracted waters, bears serene

Its brilliant hues with all their beams unshorn."

But, above all, does he, with wondrous subtlety, resolve and interpret the harmonies of its matchless music; as a fit accompaniment of which, he gives us a song of the Nymphs, which, for animation and variety, is really Pindaric. In the first stanza we hear the festive notes of youthful revellers, which insensibly melt away into the tender
lament of some love-lorn Ariadne; anon the strain
changes to the wild clangor of conflict; we hear
the mad shouts of the combatants, the groans of
the dying, the passionate wail of women: then
comes the pean of the exultine conquerors, which

soars and sinks, and swells forth again at last, into a fervent burst of thanksgiving to the Gods, the authors of all things. All this shifting play of images and of passions, as thus vividly portrayed by the writer, is it not, my friend, the true rendering of the music of the cataract, a worthy interpretation of this exquisite symphony of Nature's own composing? I am sure you will say so, after reading it. From the Velinus, the writer suddenly transplants us to Baiae, where he satirizes, in a most caustic vein, the mad humors of that watering-place, in the height of the season; showing up, with all the vigor and fidelity of a Juvenal, the motley crowd of dandies, demi-reps, gamblers, buffoons, and jockeys, that yearly infest those lovely shores. He contrasts, with admirable effect, the absurdities and vices of the place, with the temperate and rational enjoyments of a summer at Tusculum. From Tusculum, again, we are suddenly transferred to the mountains of Helvetia, amidst whose wild, grand scenery, so imperfectly explored as yet, by travellers, the writer wanders, with all an artist's zeal, and lover's Some of his thoughts on mountains fondness.

seem to me as original as they are happily expressed. Here he gives another storm scene, admirably done, and I need not say, as admirably illustrated by Scribonius; but above all, a sunrise, as seen from one of the mountain tops. It is exquisite. The whole picture is brought most vividly before us; the celestial snow-fields, the rugged glaciers, the faint flash of the streams in the morning mist, the cold, glassy lakes sleeping in darkness, while far above them, the light leaps from peak to peak, all life and gladness; the gradual awakening and illumination of Nature, in short, where Nature is most magnificent. From mountains, the writer then comes down to lakes, and discusses their comparative merits, as earnestly and learnedly as our Epicurean neighbor Vipsanius would those of rival cooks or charioteers. He devotes an entire chapter to the Leman and the Larian, and their respective claims upon the eye and heart of the beholder; the one, as seen in all the wild, uncontrolled loveliness of Nature, the other, where Art, with lavish yet reverent hand, hath added her appropriate embroidery and decorations. As a piece of subtle, delicate criticism, I know not its superior. We next find the writer on the margin of the pleasant Benacus. Here he stumbles upon the ghost of Catullus, that most dissipated, but most fascinating of bards, and they have quite a pungent and humorous chat together. Catullus, among other things, says that neither the trout in the lake, nor the wines upon its borders, are any thing like so fine as they were, when he was in the body. Poor soul, he is cvidently quite discontented with his spiritual quarters; nay, confesses in so many words that he wishes himself back on earth again, punishing the Falernian, flirting with Lesbia, and turning Greek verses into Latin. Some of his pleasantrics, perhaps, might be objected to, as bordering somewhat on irreverence. The last chapters of the work are pretty much devoted to Laurentum, and its society. One of our old fashioned Laurentum fogs is very vividly described, with some most striking effects on it, both of sunlight and moonlight: then we have some remarks on the coast scenery of different countries; none the less just and vigorous for the dainty garb in which they are clothed, and showing, as indeed the volume does throughout, a deep

feeling for Nature, in all her moods and hues. Then comes a dialogue wherein our Roman art and fashion, manners and character, are discussed in right lively style. The writer speaks out sharply and pithily, and I fear, quite too justly; giving us due credit, to be sure, for our patriotism and energy, but at the same time, rebuking us for the superficial nature of our studies, the shameful extravagance of our entertainments, our mad pursuit of wealth, and above all, our abominable bloodthirstiness. The book concludes with a gracefully introduced little poem, suggested by a view of Rome as seen at sunrise, from the Pillar of Trajan. It has a threefold division; first we have the picture of our town in its infancy, when good King Romulus first struck his ploughshare in the clods of the Palatine; then the superb spectacle of today; and finally, a highly elaborated fancy-sketch of the metropolis, twenty centuries hence, and of the bewilderingly magnificent panorama, which from the airy height of this same Pillar, will then greet the eyes of the traveller.

I have thus spoken at length of this little book, my friend, because of the downright pleasure and

profit that I have derived from its pages. It is, indeed, somewhat out of my usual sober line of reading, but none the less palatable on that account. Others, I know, hold quite different language concerning it. Our old-fashioned friend and critic, Aufidius, in particular, has no patience with it, he says, for its affectation and conceit, its perpetual attempts at brilliancy, and what he considers the arrogant and magisterial tone of its criticisms. So you see, doctors differ, for I most certainly do differ from him, toto colo. That a little self-complacency peeps out, in an occasional passage, cannot be denied, or that here and there, we meet a very plain thought in very fine clothes; but these arc mcrc spots upon the sun. As a whole, the book is alike sparkling and solid. I speak thus confidently, for I feel sure that this opinion will be confirmed by your own far better authority, and that you will, at once, assign to Lotophagesis, a permanent and honorable place in our Roman literature.

But I am spinning out my epistle to a most unconscionable length. The courier will hand you herewith, the work which you desired me to scnd you; videlicet, Menenius's Method for the Flute; price twenty-seven denarii, Bibulus not being willing to let it go for a sesterce less. He insists upon it that it is, by all odds, the best treatise upon the subject, extant; and indeed the only one, he says, where the exercises are strictly progressive, and the explanations accurately given. I should have supposed that Publius might have found something at Athens, that would have suited him better. He knows best, however. But I must not add another word. With all our warmest loves, Farewell.

v.

CAIUS SERTORIUS TO PUBLIUS VIRGINIUS.

I PROCEED, dear nephew, as per agreement, to put a few pot-hooks to parchment, for your benefit; not that I have any thing very interesting, however, to say for myself, this cloudy morning. I am writing from brother Marcus's sanctum, he being, as usual, down at the Ulpian, and I dare say, at this very moment, up to his middle in manuscripts, gathering materials for his immortal history. Inter nos, so absorbed is the old gentleman, just now, in this great work of his, that it is all but impossible to bring him down to our own good-for-nothing age and generation. He seems to have lost all interest, indeed, both in public and in family matters, and as to coming home to his meals, he hasn't done such a thing for the last month. Sister Julia scolds and scolds, but it's all of no use. Why, will you believe it, my Publius, this very morning I was asking him whom he considered the best doctor in town, and what, think you, was his reply? Tarquinius Priscus! So completely bewitched is he with these old illustrissimi of ours! Well, well, every one to his notion. These founders of our government were, no doubt, right glorious old cocks, in their day; we ought to be supremely grateful to them, I dare say; but when it comes to lying awake all night, on their account, forswearing the circus and all other entertainments, and eating one's mutton cold continually, into the bargain, such devotion as this, I must say, quite passes my comprehension. However, don't misconstrue me, or imagine for a moment, that I mean to be disrespectful to dear brother M. No, no; Jove bless his old heart. You know what a trump I think him; yes, and a far better brother than I ever deserved to have. Seriously, I have no doubt, that if his life be spared, he will reap both gold and glory, from this arduous literary enterprise of his; at any rate, he ought to, for his indomitable industry. Ah dear! what a different man, in every way, from the scapegrace Caius!

But holloa, whither is my reed wandering?

You want some news, of course. Well, let's see, Ah! yes, yes.—Be it known unto thee then, in the first place, beloved Publius, that thy young friend Marcus Livius, duly gathered and dedicated the first crop of hair from that interesting chin of his, day before yesterday; that the accompanying religious exercises of the morning, were highly solemn and appropriate, and that there was the usual frolic in the evening. I had the honor of an invitation to the supper. A right jolly time we had of it, I assure you. The supper itself was one of the most magnificent, and absurdly expensive affairs I ever saw, comprising no less than half a dozen imperial turbot, served up in as many different styles, and the smallest of them weighing, at least, a hundred pounds; a dozen boned peacocks, dressed and garnished in the very highest style of art; and, as the great crowning ornaments of the scene, a brace of full-grown Hyrcanian boars, served up entire, and stuffed in equal proportions, with truffles, olives, and Praenestine walnuts. They cut a most princely figure, I assure you, half reclining as they were, on their beds of lustrous jelly, surrounded with bouquets, their brows bound with parsley and

laurel, while chaplets of the rarest workmanship depended from their royal snouts. The way in which the band struck up, "Hail Italia," when these monarchs of the forest first made their appearance, and then again, when they fell to pieces before the accomplished carvers, was, I need not tell you, most impressive. All the music, indeed, as well as the wines, fruits, flowers, and general garniture of the feast, were of the first order. There was a very large attendance of the boys, on this auspicious occasion; conspicuous amongst them, our never-failing fat friend, Vibius, who was more omnivorous and silent than ever; not opening his mouth, indeed, from egg to pippin, save in the way of taking in refreshment. After the services of the table, we had a superb lottery. My prize was a Cleopatra, in sugar; a most elegant and fascinating creature, when first I brought her home; but I regret to add that her entire head, and two thirds of her right leg, have already been devoured by Rufus and the other youngsters. On the whole it was a very brilliant affair, and must have cost Livius Senior a very pretty penny. Between ourselves, I hardly think the heir apparent was deserving

of any such demonstration. He will never become, I fear, what brother Marcus would call an historical character, being quite too fond of fast nags, and the music of the dice-box. By the way, Publius, I have one of the sweetest little Thessalian mares on hand, at this present writing, that you ever beheld; a perfect lily-white, four years old last Floralia, and the nimblest creature on her pins imaginable. She took me along the Salarian road, the other day, as far as old Cato's, within the half hour; a distance, as you well know, of full eight miles, and without the slightest apparent effort. She is withal, as gentle as a lamb. I wanted to give Marcellina a ride on her, but her mother wouldn't listen to the proposition.

While I think of it, I witnessed a most absurd scene in the street yesterday. You must know, in the first place, that our old neighbor Corvinus, the Street-Inspector, and his gay son, Titus, have not been on the best of terms, for some time past. Such has been the estrangement, indeed, that the young man, several days ago, abandoned the paternal roof, and sought lodgings elsewhere. It so happened, however, that the two came plump up

against each other yesterday, in the Via Nova; your humble servant happening to be right behind Young Hopeful, at the very moment of the encounter. The old gentleman immediately extended his hand, saying nothing, but evidently looking pleased at the idea of a reconciliation. And how, think you, the young man received him? "Stranger." said he, drawing himself up to his full height, "you have the advantage of me." "And is it possible, Titus," the old man replied, "that you can treat your poor father in this way?" ther, my fine fellow? A pretty idea to be sure!" And instantly shading his eyes with his hand, he commenced a deliberate survey of the old gentleman's countenance, adding at the close of the operation, "Well, I suppose I must have seen that ugly old mug somewhere, but for the life of me, I can't locate it." I had to laugh, Publius, scandalous, atrocious as such behavior was. Not so, though, our friend, the inspector; he fairly shook, and turned purple with wrath, and brandishing his cane, would, I have no doubt, have administered unto the young vabagond a most righteous thrashing, had not an acquaintance stepped up, and, with

some difficulty, prevailed on him to retire. There's filial piety for you! This too, right in the heart of the town, and at high noon. Mehercule! What a world, what a world!

Well, Publius, how are you coming on in the way of amusements? How do you like the entertainments at the Lenæum? Pretty dull, I reckon; after our Roman spectacles. The new pantomime of Daphne, by the way, which has been so long in rehearsal, has been produced, at last, and has fairly taken the town by storm. The last scene. where the heroine, and some three hundred of her young female friends, are magically converted into one vast laurel-orchard, is decidedly the most surprising piece of scenic effect, I ever witnessed. How our forefathers could sit and see stupid boys and men, in such ballets as these, I never could comprehend. Some of the figurantes, I assure you, are most bewitching creatures; the pets of the company, decidedly, being four lovely Gaditanian sisters, with sweet faces, and charmingly developed figures. Some of their bounds are, both for grace and agility, perfectly marvellous, and create an immense excitement in the audience. A

perfect forest of bouquets and garlands is thrown to them, whenever they appear.

I looked in at Balbus's theatre vesterday, for a few moments. There was a mere handful present; and no wonder, for they were performing that dullest of all dull tragedies, Seneca's Agamemnon. I don't believe Seneca ever wrote it, myself, or that other still more stilted and declamatory affair, the The management seem positively Hippolytus. to be courting bankruptcy, so stupid are their selections. Now I think of it, Publius, if you can secure me a good edition of Menander, I shall be greatly obliged to you. To my utter amazement, I have been unable to find a satisfactory one, in all Rome. Scattered plays of his, of course, are very abundant; but what I want, is a complete and duly authenticated edition, with all the stage di-Suppose you consult your father on the rections. subject. Never mind a few denarii more or less, if you can only secure the genuine article. fess, I am anxious to become better acquainted with the great dramatist. A good knowledge of his plays, I am inclined to think, is about the best education a man can get. What little I have read

of him, has given me already, far more insight into men and things, than I have derived from all the lectures of professors, and discourses of flamens, that I ever heard, put together.

I was at the Circus a day or two ago. There were only eighty thousand persons present; hardly a two thirds house. The running was not very remarkable. I was foolish enough to bet on the blue, and lost my money for my pains.

The Colosseum closes on the coming Ides, after the most brilliant season (so they say) since its erection. This is the fourth year of the new arrangement of paying at the doors, and it appears to give universal satisfaction. It seems strange, now, that no Emperor or Prefect should have ever ventured on such a step, before. To show how well the thing works, I assure you that I was offered yesterday, within ten days of the close, the same sum for my season ticket, that I paid at the opening; and this, too, notwithstanding the comparative rarity, this year, of gladiatorial combats. To be sure, we have had the Waltzing Elephant, Scipio, to fall back on. He, by the way, you will be glad to learn, preserves his health and spirits,

and performs more wonderful feats than ever; both on the tight rope, and in the ring. He positively threw a double somerset, the other day, to the frantic delight of a packed house. Your father's old friends, the Flacci, I understand, are trying hard to get the lease of the building for the next season; the prefect not allowing it to run for more than a single year. Should they succeed, they will make a fortune by it; unless, perchance, the Emperor should be carried off in the mean time; an event which people seem to think by no means unlikely. The entertainments of the present campaign, are to close with a superb Naumachia, about which the town is all agog.

And so you miss the Brundusium oysters, do you? And don't seem to think much of the Athenian cuisine, generally. Why, what an incorrigible young epicure you are becoming! I have taken mercy upon you, however, and written down to our friend Balbus, to send you a half dozen kegs of the choicest, to be forwarded by the first vessel. Should they arrive safe, please present them to the procurator, with my respects.

You needn't be over-anxious, by the way, to

show this document to the old gentleman. might perhaps think it somewhat frivolous and unbecoming. Marcus, I am sure, would say so, Poor Marcus, he's rather hard on me, sometimes, He says I'm altogether too fond of dissipation, and sadly wanting in persistency. I don't know but what he's right. I certainly have no great fondness for the law, I must confess, notwithstanding the marvellous facilities that, they say, are afforded to us students, by the New Code; and indeed, I have thought, more than once, of abandoning the profession, and of purchasing a commission in the army. I should like to see a little service in Spain or Syria, I must say, or if need be, even in distant and dreary Britain. Any thing for a change. I was never cut out for a pleader, I'm sure. At the same time, Publius, I have not been altogether an idler in Capito's office, having all but finished (thank Jove) Salvius's Commentaries, and attended nearly every other lecture of Julian's Course, (Don't forget, by the way, to send me the Athenian Turf Register, for the last four Olympiads.) And then again, brother M. is too apt to forget the difference in our ages; nearly a score of years; and

that I really belong to your generation, more than to his. Speaking of generations, reminds me that I went with sister Julia and the children a day or two ago, to see a very aged and indigent Gallic female, whom Gurges the showman has been trying to pass off on the community lately, as the nurse of Agricola. A blind, deaf, wrinkled, toothless, horrid old fright as I ever beheld. All we could get out of her, after a world of jogging and bawling, was a solitary monosyllabic grunt. A downright imposition, of course; and to say truth, we felt quite cheap afterwards at the thought of having been taken in so. There were numerous other victims at the time, however, and I have no doubt that Gurges, what with his placards, and transparencies, and Extra Brass Band for the occasion, will make the thing pay, as usual,

But Rufus is bawling for me to come and mend his hobby-horse, and so I must e'en bring these instructive remarks to a close.

Bye, bye, Publius. Take care of yourself.

VI.

MARCUS SERTORIUS TO LUCIUS VIRGINIUS.

I send you, my dear friend, my usual tri-monthly epistle, though I have nothing of special interest to impart. We duly received your last package of letters, the agreeable and disversified contents of which were right welcome.

I had a short letter yesterday, from Labeo, who is spending a few days at Baiae, in which he speaks a trifle more encouragingly of the Emperor's health. He had had an interview with him the day previous. He was quite calm and rational, nay, sprightly even, at times, on his favorite topics of Art and Literature; among other remarks, expressing the hope that he might yet so far recover, as to give his usual grand literary pic-nic at the Tiburtine Villa, in the course of the summer. Labeo has not the slightest idea, however, that he will be able to do

so; and, indeed, the impression made upon him by the visit, and confirmed by the statements of the doctors was, that the Emperor was a very, very sick man.

On my way home from the Library, to-day, I was stopped by Albinus, who insisted on taking me into his studio, to see a picture he has just finished. I was highly gratified, and think it, on the whole, the best thing he has done. The subject is a painful one; the death of Octavia, the wife of Nero. The artist has closely followed the inimitable description of Tacitus, and represented the poor young creature, as she is struggling in vain with her executioners; her final appeals to their mercy, and protestations of her innocence, just stifled by the hand of violence. Near her are two female attendants: the same whose loyalty is commemorated by the historian; from whom no racks nor tortures could extort a word, in their young queen's dishonor, and who are supposed to have followed her into exile. Faithful to the last, they here come forth to die by the side of their dear mistress. The youth, grace, beauty of these three figures, and above all, the pleading pathos of their looks and gestures, are ad-

mirably contrasted with those of the bronzed and hardened ruffians, around them, in whose countenances all the different phases of brutality are depieted, with great power and discrimination. The time is not long before sunsct, and the sombre hues of the sky, and of the landscape, accord well with the bloody tragedy they are about to witness. There are in all, a dozen figures, a little less than the size The drawing and grouping seem to me perfeetion. The coloring might be objected to, perhaps, as wanting in force and variety. I think myself, with all due deference, that there is too much shadow in the picture; but in the great eardinal virtue of expression, it is truly a master-piece. I ean't imagine a story told on canvas, with more power and clearness. Albinus has only shown it to a few friends, as yet; but to-morrow, he is duly to submit it to public inspection, at the Baths of Titus, and I am sure it will create a great sensation. He asks sixteen thousand sesterces for it : cheap enough, I should say, for a picture of such pretensions. The moment I got home, I turned to the volume of the great master, and read with renewed delight, the passage in question. Wonderful, wonderful artist! what a pen of fire he wields! In how few, yet terrible words, does he portray this scene of blood, does he rehearse the leading events in the brief, but most unhappy life, of the ill-fated empress, and above all, does he launch his thunders on the brutal prince, and the dastardly senate, who could pervert such accursed transactions as these, into causes of thanksgiving to the Gods! Ah, Lucius, when I meet with such passages as this, and then turn to my own attempts at historical writing, I confess, I am tempted to fling away my pen, in disgust, and for ever.

You will not be surprised, perhaps, to hear that our young friend Cassius has come out, at last, an avowed Christian. As for myself, I was fully prepared for it. I have had several conversations with him lately, upon this subject, and have steadily endeavored to dissuade him from this (for so I must consider it) most unfortunate step. The idea of a young man of his talents and connections, throwing himself away thus; linking his fortunes to those of a sect so obscure, and scattered, and despised; a sect, which, if not persecuted to-day with the same bitterness and violence, as in former years, is yet,

more than ever, the theme of derision among the schools, more than ever out of odor at Court, and in all refined circles; I am out of all patience with him, I confess, to trifle thus with his prospects. However, all has been of no use; his mind is made up, he says, his understanding convinced, that this same Christianity is the only true faith, this Jesus the only true messenger from heaven, and authorized interpreter of the divine decrees. What, then, can he do, as an honest man, but confess and follow him?

Well, I must say, I can't help admiring his manliness and integrity, deluded though I think him; and the hearty zeal, with which he fights for his new creed.

In the course of recent conversations, he has handed me some of the sacred books of this religion; stray copies of which, I had occasionally stumbled over before, in the course of my literary researches, but had only glanced at them, as it were, in passing. He insisted, however, on my now giving these same narratives and doctrines, a more deliberate and candid perusal. I have done so; not without interest, certainly. The style, to be sure, as you may be

awarc, my friend, is none of the purest, or the general treatment of the subject such, as would have won for the authors any plaudits at the Academy, or laurels at Olympia. There is, moreover, a great profusion of supernatural events, thrown together without much order: miraculous births, cures, restorations to life, transformations, etc.; the whole concluding with the miraculous resurrection of the founder, after a three days' death, and his ascension, as it is called, into heaven; stories, the fellows of which, may surely be found in great abundance, in our own, and all other creeds that the world has ever heard of. Intermixed with these there are, undoubtedly, some most charmingly told little parables, embodying wholesome truths, and some scattered precepts of morality, alike pure and lofty; though not, as it seems to me, one whit more felicitous, in conception or expression, than those handed down to us by Pythagoras, Numa, Socrates, Plato, and many other of our great teachers; while there are others, again, which appear to me as unreasonable as they are novel : nav. quite inappropriate to our poor human nature. The idea that this curious medley of events and precepts, is an

express and authentic message from the realms above, or that it is any more binding on us mortals, as a rule of conduct, than the Memorabilia, or the Phædo, or the beautiful Enchiridion of our own Epictetus, I cannot, my friend, admit it for a moment.

I remarked as much to Cassius, on returning the volumes. He took me up very warmly, of course; he wondered that I should presume to compare the maxims of all the combined sages of Greece and Egypt, with the sublime doctrines of the Sermon on the Mount, as he called it; (referring, under that name, to a collection of sententious sayings, supposed to be uttered by Jesus to a crowd of wayfarers and peasants of Judea, and duly recorded in one of these same manuscripts;) or that I could not see the difference, the world-wide difference, between the miracles set forth in these books and the absurd legends of India, or of Etruria, with which I confounded them; but, above all, that I should speak in the same breath, of the resurrection of Osiris, or Adonis, (as I unguardedly did,) and the all glorious resurrection of Christ. On this last point he expressed himself with great

earnestness. He then went on to say, that the evidence, external and internal, of the divine origin of these books, the more he studied it, the more and more convincing it became; and that the character of Christ himself, was a conception which no human mind, unaided by direct inspiration from above, could ever have formed. Waxing warmer and warmer as he proceeded, he then went on to prophesy the ultimate triumph of this religion over all the other creeds of earth; he believed that the name of Jesus was destined to be blest and honored above all other names, whether of sages, bards, or heroes; that his followers were to be scattered abroad in all lands, nav in mighty realms beyond the deep, yet unexplored by human industry; that the best hopes of the world, indeed, were based upon his life and doetrines; that by them alone. could savage man, and savage nature be subjugated, civilized, sanetified; that no other religion met the wants of the race, or could develope aright, the capacities, either of man or of earth; and therefore, (so was it decreed in the councils of heaven, and duly recorded by these same inspired writers,) that its influence, feeble and contemptible as it might now

appear in the eyes of its enemies, should yet survive all their malice, and grow in strength more and more, continually, even unto the final glorious consummation of an universal and permanent dominion. He then proceeded to draw a passionate and vivid picture of the world, as existing under such influence, and world-wide sway of Christianity; which I shall not, however, undertake to copy for you.

I must say, my friend, that I was both amused and interested by this hearty outburst of enthusiasm, on the part of our young preacher. My report of his remarks, to be sure, is a very inadequate one, and indeed, a good deal of what he said was, I confess, not very intelligible to me.

I ventured to reply, however, that I could not agree with him; that I thought his zeal somewhat outran his judgment in this matter; that I could not see, either in these same sacred books of his, or in the aspect of affairs around me, any thing, whereon to base such romantic expectations, as he had expressed; nay more, that I did not believe there ever had been, or would be, any such thing on earth, as a permanent and universal religion; that I was no Tiresias, or son of a Tiresias, and would not presume therefore, to

"look into the seeds of time, And say, which grain will grow, and which will not,"

as Lucretius expresses it; that it might, indeed, be decreed in the divine councils, that this same Christianity should get the better of the now dominant religion of the empire; should even be adopted by the Court, as the State-religion; but if it were so, that I believed it would go through very much the same experiences as its predecessor; that as it grew in power, it would grow in corruption; that there would be the same multiplication of demi-gods, the same deification of unworthy men, to be found in its Fasti; the same superfluity of costly ceremonials, and idle superstitions, in its ritual; that its priests, as they waxed strong in wealth and place, would, like too many of the ministers that were a scandal to our own worship, become indolent, voluptuous, treacherous, cruel; in a word, that the same elements of destruction, that we philosophers thought we saw at work, in the present creed of Rome, would be alike operative, in time, in any other that might supplant it; and therefore, that this same Christianity, should it ever become a thing of power and significance among men, must yet, in its turn, de-

cline, totter, fall, and out of its ruins, a new creed be constructed, in its turn again, to fulfil the same round of destiny; and that this rotation of religions, I believed, would last, so long as earth itself lasted. I thought that the idea of a perfectly authenticated. world-embracing, permanently established religion on earth, was an unphilosophical one, conflicting, as it did, with all the laws of our being, so far as we could understand them; that in this very uncertainty as to the nature of the Gods and our own, as to their commands and our duties, and especially as to the experiences that await us beyond the tomb. was to be found the very essence of life's discipline; in short, I talked upon this point, in the same way that you yourself, my dear friend, have heard me talk a thousand times, and which I must not, therefore, dwell upon now. You never would agree with me, to be sure, in this opinion; you, who are as great a stickler for the existing religion of Rome, as our young friend is for this new faith of his.

But enough of things ecclesiastical. Cassius has fairly committed himself, nor do I believe that he will ever recede from his position. Come what may of it, I shall never cease to value him, as a man

of genuine courage and truthfulness; and I feel sure, that whatever he may be called upon to encounter, in the way of loss of position, ridicule, obloquy, estrangement of friends, or even the more cruel persecutions of former years, should they unhappily be revived amongst us, he will face them all, like the true hero, and Roman that he is.

I know that you think so, too, my dear Lucius, or I should not have expended so much space on the subject.

I met the excellent Antoninus the other day, in the portico of Octavia. He did me the honor of stopping me, and we had quite an agreeable chat. He talked in his usual calm, wise, hopeful manner; he spoke of the probable death of the Emperor, ere many months, but at the same time, he could see none of those dark clouds in the political horizon, that I did. Between ourselves, I thought he spoke more cheerfully than he really felt. In reply to my inquiry about the rumored nomination of Verus, he was rather ambiguous. I fear there is quite too much truth in the report. If Antoninus himself, now, were the imperial nominee, what a glorious day, my friend, it would

be for Rome! I longed to tell him so to his face, but he has such a contempt for any thing that sounds like flattery, that I did not venture. young Aurelius was with him, at the time. What a noble looking youth he is! I don't know when I have seen a countenance so full of ingenuousness and intelligence; and indeed, Julia tells me, that all the young folks in Rome are in love with him, so smart and amiable is he. She says too, that he is already engaged to the young Faustina, though he does not don the manly gown, till the coming Liberalia. Fortunate girl, if it is so! Ah, I wish Caius was more like him. This last young gentleman, by the way, was talking very loudly, after supper, last evening, of the magnificent new theatre, that is to be; the corner-stone of which was laid by the Prefect, yesterday, in presence of a distinguished audience, and with unusual display. It-is to be called the Hortensian, after our immortal orator; to be somewhat larger than that of Pompey, and to be devoted strictly to the classic drama; but for further particulars I refer you to your own files of the Acta. I was not present on the occasion, and to say truth, I am

fast losing my relish for things theatrical. It is some months now, since I have darkened the doors of a play-house; not, in fact, since we saw Ovid's Medea together, at the Claudian.

But I must not trifle with your time, any longer. This epistle, such as it is, will be handed you by our mutual friend Drusus, who purposes spending a few days at Athens, on his way to Nicomedia, whither he goes, partly for the sake of seeing some of his kindred, who are residing there, and partly to try the virtues of its mineral waters; his health having been a good deal impaired of late, from his over devotion to his forensic duties. And so no more at present from your prosy, but loving friend. Farewell.

VII.

SERTORIUS TO VIRGINIUS.

I have, at last, my dear friend, found an occupant for your house; and who should it be, but our excellent friend Arrian, brother of the historian. You must know that there was quite a large fire, a few days ago, in the Via Hostilia, whereby that fine block, in which his house is situated, was pretty much destroyed, and the adjoining one to the north, on the Via Aurelia, seriously injured. The Temple of Hercules itself, was in great danger, at one time, but escaped with a slight scorching. The fire originated in the house of the ædile Libo, and was owing entirely to the carelessness of a drunken slave of a cook in his kitchen. The scoundrel, he had a very narrow escape from crucifixion, for his pains. Fortunately there were no lives lost, but a great deal of valuable property.

Friend A. was among the heaviest sufferers; all his household goods, wines of which he had a choice collection, and nearly all his valuable library having been consumed. He was giving me the particulars of his loss, the other morning. Among other treasures, he mentioned his very rare and complete copy of the Elder Pliny's works, in a hundred and sixty volumes; each volume having a portrait of some distinguished contemporary prefixed, enriched, nearly all of them, with valuable marginal notes, and secured by golden bosses of exquisite workmanship; the same having been a present to his father, from Pliny the Younger. I dare say, though, my friend, you are much more familiar with the manuscripts in question, than I am myself. That fine collection of statuettes too, of the Imperial family, which you admired so greatly, you remember, at the last Annual Exhibition of the Academy, by the Corinthian Eubulus, has fallen a victim to the flames. But, above all, the inimitable Timomachus, the Dido Abandoned, one of the very finest pictures in town, as you well know, and for which Arrian says he has recently refused a hundred and fifty thousand sesterces, has perished, notwithstanding all the efforts made by his slaves to rescue it. A pretty hard case, is it not? Our friend bears it, though, like a philosopher. In this emergency, he at once bethought himself of your pleasant mansion, as the most desirable place of refuge, till he can build himself another. He had before, he told me, bought some very eligible lots on the Cœlian, at the recent sale of the estate of Regulus, with a view to moving; and he intends commencing operations forthwith. Meanwhile, he acceded at once to your terms, with the privilege of possession for another year, at the same price, and is already comfortably installed in his new quarters. I hope Valeria and you will be pleased with this arrangement. I confess I am; for though not a very neighborly body myself, I yet feel the value of so good a neighbor in case of need, And then Julia knows the family quite well, and says it is a very pleasant one to visit. So we are all suited you see, if you are. We spent the greater part of the other evening there, and I was really quite glad to renew the acquaintance; Arrian and I having seen very little of each other, for the last three or four years. He spoke of you, quite

warmly. He is evidently a man of high culture, and agreeable manners. I shouldn't be surprised. indeed, should he live, if he should make as much noise in the world, as his brother. Capito tells me that he already stands in the very front rank of his profession as Civil Engineer, and is besides one of the most accomplished Architects in town. He told me himself, that he was supervising a new edition of Vitruvius, which is to be embellished with elaborate designs, taken from all the notable monuments of Art, that have been erected in the metropolis, since the days of Augustus; a much needed work, he says, and one in which the Emperor has manifested great interest. He has a great passion and talent for music, moreover. His wife, by the way, showed us a curious antique, being a guitar, once in the possession of Nero, and the same wherewith the minstrel-miscreant is supposed to have won so many of his musical victories in Greece; a quaint, old-fashioned affair, richly set with gems and gold, and some finely executed relief-work. Its merits, however, I confess, were quite thrown away upon me.

Arrian told me, among other things, many very

interesting anecdotes of the historian, and of his military experience in the East, and especially of the manner in which he got together his materials for that master-piece, the Expedition of Alexander. By the way, I got Julia to read aloud to us last night from that charming work, and we were all more delighted with it than ever. Even little Rufus kept awake. What judgment, ease, elegance! What clearness of diction! What freedom from affectation and wonder-hunting! How different in all these respects from the pompous Curtius! How incomparably superior to all the thousand and one memoirs of the royal debauchee and cutthroat! I am sure you agree with me.

But I was still more interested in what Arrian told me about the illustrious Epictetus. Do you know it is just a twelvemonth to-morrow, Lucius, since the good old man left us for elysium? How often since, as I have walked by that humble cot of his, have I wished its dear tenant back again, that I might gather up, more reverently than ever, the precious maxims of those honored lips! If I had my way, my friend, that same cot should be preserved as sacredly as the straw-thatched cottage

of Romulus itself! But what I was about to tell you was, that the elder Arrian, who, you know, was always the favorite disciple of our philosopher, has been devoting all his leisure, for some time past, to a biography of him, which his brother says, will abound in interesting facts and anecdotes, and moreover serve to clear up and illustrate many passages in the immortal Enchiridion. I confess, I shall look forward to this work with great impatience. He hopes to have it finished, against the saturnalia, unless, indeed, he is compelled to go to Cappadocia again, this summer.

Our Century Club had their usual monthly meeting at Matho's. There was a pretty fair attendance. The question discussed by us was rather a queer one, and quite characteristic of our whimsical host, who proposed it. It brought out a good deal of fun, however. It was simply this: Whether of the twain is preferable, eupepsy and obscurity, or dyspepsy and immortality? Don't be alarmed; I am not going to give you even an analysis of the arguments of the various speakers, but simply to record the vote, which, I am ashamed to say, was all but unanimous in favor of the eupeptics. After

the debate, brother Priscus recited some more of those famous Alban odes of his with great applause. They had the true Horatian smack about them, I assure you. I hope P. will soon be persuaded to give them to the world. Brother Proculus was, of course, present, and favored us with a very long and exceedingly soothing paper on the Temples of Pæstum. The symposium was in Matho's usual tasteful style. Your health, I need hardly add, was drank with all the honors, and in the most delicious Falernian I ever tasted.

Julia was telling me just now of an interesting affair that came off yesterday. The occasion of it was as follows: You must know, then, that the ship-of-war Camillus left the port of Ostia, about a fortnight since, bound for Alexandria, having on board several of the officers, and a large portion of the soldiers of the fourth legion, which has recently been ordered to that station; that in her second day out, when nearly abreast of Circæum, and about twenty-five miles from shore, she was overtaken by a violent northwester; that notwithstanding all the efforts of the master and steersmen she could not be made to obey her helm, but

kept flying off continually, and at last became perfectly unmanageable, and lay like a log completely at the mercy of the elements. Whether this was to be ascribed to some defect in her construction, or to bad or excessive loading, is not yet known. To add to her troubles, she soon after sprung a leak, though supposed to be the strongest, as she was by far the largest vessel in the Roman navv. soldiers were forthwith organized into bailinggangs, and kept hard at work for three or four days in that capacity. Shortly after the leak was discovered the Camillus exchanged signals with the bark Three Graces, Philocles, commander, on her way to Ostia from Corinth. The gallant little craft made at once to the assistance of the unfortunate vessel, but owing to the tumultuous state of the sea was unable, at first, to render any service. She remained by her, however, faithfully to the end, it requiring all her commander's skill and watchfulness to keep her from foundering herself, This state of things continued for some days. Meanwhile the waves broke with fearful violence over the ill-fated Camillus, one terrible one washing overboard nearly a hundred souls; among whom, I grieve to tell you, was our worthy old friend Curio, the tribune, and his nephew Sabinus, the centurion. At last the tempest abated, the sea became comparatively calm, and a successful communication was established between the two vessels. In a word, after much delay and difficulty, every soul was safely transferred to the deck of the Three Graces, the Camillus (whose devoted commander was the last man to leave her) going down within an hour afterwards. The second day from the rescue, the bark duly deposited her passengers at Ostia, they having suffered greatly, in the mean time, for want of provisions. There being no substitute for the Camillus in port, the troops will remain there for the present; most of the officers having since returned to the city, and with them the brave Philocles. The moment that the circumstances above glanced at came to the ear of the Prefect, he resolved that such a signal piece of heroism on the part of the worthy Corinthian should not go uncommemorated. the ceremonies of which Julia was speaking. consisted, first, of a special thanksgiving service, in the morning, in the temple of Neptune, at

which all the rescuers were present, and the rescued, with their votive offerings; next, of a formal presentation of the civic crown, by the Prefect's own hands, in the Theatre of Marcellus; and finally, of a public reception to the gallant captain in the Prefect's apartments in the capitol. At this last, Julia was present. She was accompanied by Caius, I having been detained at home by indisposition. Marcellina went with them, carrying with her a bouquet as big as herself, which the hero duly acknowledged with a kiss. A superb service of plate has also been decreed to him by the Senate, and a purse of gold to his crew. The whole affair was quite brilliant, according to Julia, who expressed herself very enthusiastically about it. I must say I sympathize with her. We Romans have been quite too fond, from the beginning, of lavishing our honors and plaudits on the men who take life; and it is, indeed, refreshing to find the far higher claims of those who save it, thus promptly recognized and honored. It was a good move on the part of the Prefect, and I have no doubt that good will come out of it.

I have one more pleasant item of news to tell

you, and I will then bring my epistle to a close. It is this: Our great lawyer, Julianus, has appropriated the princely sum of two millions and a half of sesterces, being no inconsiderable portion of his professional earnings for the last five and twenty years, to the foundation and endowment of a Law School, to be called, after him, the Julian Academy. I say Law School, though lectures on Greek and Roman Literature, Moral Philosophy, and the Exact Sciences, are also included in the plan of its teachings. The main object, however, is to afford to all the respectable young men of Rome, without distinction, gratuitous instruction from the best lecturers that can be had, in all the branches of Jurisprudence. A charter has already been granted by the Emperor, and a design, furnished by Theodorus, adopted for the building. Julianus was kind enough to show it to me, the other day. It is to be a massive structure, three stories high, a hundred feet square; to be built of Alban stone; elegant, without excess of ornament, and to be surrounded by a fine colonnade of the Ionic order. The site is an excellent one, being at the junction of the Viæ Aurelia and Tarquinia. Julianus hopes to have it finished by two years, and purposes, the Gods willing, to deliver the first course of lectures in it, himself, on the Jus Gentium. The ground floor, I should have added, is to be devoted to handsome and commodious shops. from the rents of which J. expects that the fund set apart for the support of the Academy, will be materially augmented. There are to be twenty Trustees; the Prefect, the three eldest Senators, and the two eldest members of the Pontifical College, to be, ex officio, Members of the Board. Isn't it a glorious idea? How preferable to your post-mortem charities, too often the mere offspring of vanity! Here the founder can see the good fruits of his benefaction, and, above all, can supervise its workings, and remedy any frauds or errors that may grow out of its administration. I am charmed with it, I confess, and think Julianus deserves immortal honor. One feature in the plan, by the way, he is very earnest about; and that is, the construction of an observatory, and the procuring or inventing appropriate instruments, wherewith to study the heavens. The enlarging and amending of our astronomical knowledge, as you know, has always been a hobby with him. How often, even in his

forensic efforts, has he gone out of his way, to enlarge upon this theme, and to launch the thunders of his eloquence against the nefarious astrologers. the Chaldean pests, that are in our midst, and are fattening upon the ignorance and superstition of their votaries; wretches that still infest all parts of the empire, notwithstanding the edicts of emperors, and the decrees of senates. Nothing indeed, he says, can effectually banish these monsters, and their impious mummeries, but the diffusion of the pure light of science; to promote which glorious end, he has created two Professorships of Astronomy. and offered handsome premiums for all improvements in our Philosophical Apparatus. But, I must not dwell upon this point. A synopsis of Julianus's charity, will shortly appear, he tells me, in the Acta Diurna, to which I refer you, for further details

I ask again, my dear friend, isn't this a blessed way of spending one's money, instead of squandering it on costly entertainments, or bloody games? Ah, Lucius, we need more such examples. It is mortifying, it is shameful to think how little of our time and means we proud Romans give, either to

the cause of education, or to the alleviation of the moral or physical infirmities of our brethren. heap up talent upon talent, to build baths with, and theatres, and porticoes, and triumphal arches; we can lavish thousands upon the decorations of our supper-tables, while at the same time, there is not a decent hospital in all Rome. Think of that; yes, of all the structures that crown our hills, whose profuse magnificence gives no rest to the dazzled eyes of the stranger, which one, I ask, of all these sumptuous roofs hath shelter for the poor widow, or orphan, or lunatic? Not one; no, not a solitary home for sickness or poverty. Private benevolence, thank the Gods, is abundant in its ministrations; but our public, organized, permanent charities, where are they? Who can help blushing, when he thinks of these things? Oh, that I had your pen or tongue, my friend, that I might arouse my brethren from their apathy; that I might frighten into usefulness and activity, the perfumed fops and epicures around me; men who dawdle away their lives in baths, with no thoughts beyond their chaplets and their mistresses, when there is such a world of squalor, wretchedness and vice, crying unto

them for help and counsel; ay, within a stone's throw of the Palatine.

We can waste the wealth of provinces, too, on our sepulchral monuments; we can mock the skies with our Imperial Mausolea, and yet, as I said before, we have not a single retreat for living misery Oh shame on such monstrous perversions to flee to. Yes, the Mausoleum of Hadrian himself as these ! (I speak it with all due respect, my friend), that is so soon to receive his handful of ashes; that sumptuous resting-place, with all its wealth of marbles, and multitude of statues, what a miserable mockery is it, after all! Nay, how pitiful, how contemptible a thing must it seem in the eyes of heaven, when contrasted with the noble and beneficent institution with which Julianus is about to endow Rome. But fortunately for you, I have got to the bottom of my page, and so spare you any further preaching from this text.

The Gods ever bless and cherish you, and your dear ones. Farewell.

VIII.

VIRGINIUS TO SERTORIUS.

Your letter, my dear Marcus, of the 7th of last Kalends, was duly received yesterday. I am happy to say that it found us all in excellent health and spirits, and more than ever pleased with our new residence. We have been here now, nearly two months, and we really feel that if we could only have some of our dear Roman friends with us, we would gladly protract our stay to two years. As it is, be not surprised at such a result, even though I should not remain in an official capacity. My duties, as I intimated to you before, are neither disagreeable, nor onerous, thanks to my excellent predecessor, and the valuable counsels of Sempronius. Two hours a day, I find ample for the faithful performance of them; thus leaving me, you see, a glorious margin for study, sight-seeing, and social pleasures.

It would do Julia's heart good to see how Valeria is enjoying herself, and how charmed she appears with every body and every thing about her. Athens far, far transcends, she says, all her wildest expectations. You must know that we have changed our quarters recently, and are now in most agreeable lodgings in the Ceramicus, within a stone's throw of the Temple of Theseus; an excellent situation in every way. We have a fine southern and western exposure, our side windows commanding the Acropolis and Mount Hymettus, while we have in front, a most superb view of the Piræus, bay and There is a delightful garden, moreover, islands. annexed to the house, which is exclusively at our service. For the whole apartment, including nearly a dozen roomy and well-furnished chambers, we pay the moderate sum of a thousand sesterces per month. What would our Roman landlords say to that, my friend? Our meals are served from an adjoining restaurant. The cuisine certainly is not so profuse or luxurious, as we are accustomed to, at home; still, excellent and abundant, especially in the fish department; the market of Phalerum, not being one whit behind its immemorial fame in this regard.

We have already made a great many valuable acquaintances here, and have had all sorts of civilities heaped upon us, both from Athenians and Ro-Of course, I need not add, that we have done a great deal of lionizing, and have a world of work before us still, in the way of temples, galleries, antiquities and excursions without number. We get pretty tired sometimes, to be sure; but Valeria's zeal and enthusiasm carry us bravely over all difficulties; and then, when we come to compare notes together, each day, after supper, we invariably find that we have been a thousand-fold rewarded for our pains; such a boundless profusion is there here, of sublime and beautiful objects. Indeed, the artattractions of Athens are perfectly inexhaustible. I had no conception of it, I assure you. Why, the Parthenon alone, to say nothing of its precious contents, would require the daily visits of at least six months, if we would duly honor its claims upon the student. This is a familiar theme to you, I know, Marcus: else I should be tempted to go into the usual traveller's raptures about it, and chant, in my turn, the praises of this miracle of art, of its divine portico, its matchless frieze, and, above all, of its

twin pediments, at once the delight and despair of our modern sculptors, whose storied groups still sparkle in the sunlight, fresh as when they left the hand of Phidias. Else, too, would I sing to you of the sublime Minerva, and the Apollo, of the Plato and the Pericles, and of that towering head of Jove, that amazing combination of strength, and wisdom, and serenity, to which our own God of the Pantheon, is tame and lustreless. The inimitable Bacchus, too, so radiant with- But you have seen all these fine things for yourself, my friend, and so I must spare you my common-places concerning them, and the myriad other masterpieces of painting, sculpture, architecture, that, at every turn of the head, confront the stranger, in this wondrous town. Nor must I dwell upon those superb structures, wherewith the taste and munificence of our own Emperor have still farther enriched it; those worthy additions to the noble piles around them; for are not all these things already in the mouths of thousands of travellers, and are they not, moreover, duly set forth in the ponderous pages of Pausanias?

What a pity, by the way, Marcus, that there is no more portable, or more genial hand-book for the traveller in Greece. I would not speak disrespectfully of our geographical brother. There certainly is a deal of valuable information and solid learning, in his work; but then he is so stiff and frigid, and so absurdly concise, at times, on the very points that are most interesting, while at others, he is so needlessly diffuse on unimportant matters, that I get out of all patience with him. I speak now of the original, Sicinius's translation, which I have not yet seen, being, they say, from its judicious notes, a decided improvement upon it. But then again, these same notes must make it all the more unwieldy, and more impracticable, therefore, as a work of reference on the spot. Besides, who wants to have a couple of slaves tagging at one's heels continually, with a cart-load of maps and manuscripts? I wonder the Athenian publishers have not stirred in this matter before.

Who do you think called upon us yesterday?

No less a personage, than our illustrious and venerable friend, Plutarch. I wonder, now I think of it, how I could have omitted mentioning, that we spent a day at Cheronea, on our way hither, and were most hospitably entertained by the old gentle-

His house is not a large, but exceedingly tasteful one, about a mile from the western gate of the town. The grounds about it are very charming, while the mansion itself is literally crammed with treasures and curiosities, literary and artistic; most of them being marks of respect, from grateful pupils, including not a few antiques of the rarest quality. His youngest daughter keeps house for him; a charming person, and by all odds, the most youthful looking grandmother I ever saw. husband we did not see, he having gone to Alexandria, at the time. The dear old man was as amiable and anecdotical as ever, and insisted on showing Valeria in person all his valuables; among them, my friend, a magnificent collection of autographs, which puts even your famous one to the blush; a series of medals of all the old Athenian Kings and Archons, in high relief, and executed with marvellous spirit and appearance of truth; and what, he said, he valued more than all the rest put together, an original portrait of Epaminondas. It is a noble piece of work, certainly: done on panel by Euphranor, and wonderfully preserved. I must not omit to mention a volume of designs, by an unknown artist, illustrative of the Iliad; of inimitable grace and beauty, and which our philosopher said, some enthusiasts had vainly tried to persuade him, was the work of the divine Apelles himself. Valeria went quite into raptures over it, to the evident gratification of the old gentleman. Indeed, our visit was in every respect a delightful one.

But what, think you, brought our friend to Athens? You will be surprised, indeed, when I tell you, that he has come to town, expressly to deliver a course of twelve lectures, on the Antiquities of Egypt. This too, from a man who, as he told me this morning, will see his ninetieth birthday, next July ! I ventured to say that I thought he was overdoing the matter, and though I should be among the most eager of his listeners, I yet feared whether he would be able to carry out his intention. He laughed at the idea; said that he was never better in his life; that he didn't mean to quit the field, for ten years yet; nay more, that he had already engaged to repeat the course at Corinth, and if encouraged, should do the same at Mantinea. There's zeal for you! Be assured, my

friend, that I shall not miss a lecture, nor let Publius. After a very pleasant call, I accompanied the philosopher to his lodgings. He has most charming chambers in the Prytaneum, reserved expressly for him by the Archons; he being, I need not tell you, the guest of the city, whenever he comes to town.

By the way, Marcus, I begin to think you are right about Publius. The lad certainly is altogether too wild, and fond of low company. I am quite out of patience with him. Do you believe it, he actually hasn't looked into his Euclid, or his Homer, for the last ten days; either dancing attendance at the Hippodrome, all the while, or else wasting his mornings at the Piraeus, roaming about the quays, listening to the ballads of drunken sailors, or watching the absurd tricks of filthy jugglers. I took him to task right heartily about it, yesterday, I assure you. Unfortunately though, his mother came in, and, of course, flew to the rescue. I might as well have saved my breath, I suppose. To do him justice though, there is no malice about the lad, and when he chooses, he can make himself very agreeable. I can't help hoping that he will mend in time, and become more thoughtful and studious. After all, talking don't do much good, and as for harsh treatment, I have no faith in it. The duty, or the diligence, that springs from fear alone, what a pitiful mockery is it! Well, well, my friend, it matters little in the end, what our discipline may be. Destiny will work out her task, in spite of us. If the Gods are kindly disposed towards the lad, they will of course, carry out their benevolent plans in his behalf; if not, all the good parents and teachers on earth, can't keep him from going to Tartaus. But no more of this. I should not have said so much, indeed, but for the kindly interest you have so often expressed in the youngster.

We have been to the Lenæum several times since our arrival, and have been uniformly charmed. Indeed, I have not missed a performance, when I could possibly run away from my other engagements. The houses have been good, not crowded, while the entertainments have been of the first order; the declamation, music, dancing, all alike admirable. The building itself, capacious as it is, seems at first blush, a little contracted, to the

Roman eye at least, accustomed to wander over the vast area of the Colosseum or the Theatre of Antinous; but on the whole, there is an air of comfort and elegance about it, which we do not find in our play-houses. But oh, the associations of the spot! Here again, Marcus, I find it difficult to repress my enthusiasm. Who, indeed, could enter for the first time unmoved, this worldrenowned temple of art, this home of the Muses and the Graces; where so many masterpieces have been presented, so many divine odes have been chanted, so many passionate strains of grief and piety and patriotism have been poured forth. so many showers of wit and sarcasm have been scattered amongst the brightest and keenest of audiences, so many pungent reproofs administered alike to rulers and to people? What other building on earth, my friend, hath any such intellectual victories to boast of, any such fond memories clustering round it? Whose daily banquets were served up of old, in prodigal profusion, by those master-caterers, Æschylus, Sophocles, Menander, Aristophanes; whose daily guests were Plato, and Socrates, and Aristotle, and Pericles, and Cimon

the munificent, and Alcibiades the brilliant, and Aristides the just. Where are they all, my friend, these master-spirits of the past? What has become of this goodly congregation of wits, beauties, heroes, statesmen, sages, that day after day, thronged these seats, now convulsed with laughter, now melted to tears, at the bidding of the archenchanters? Have they, indeed, perished then, have they gone down to mere decay and oblivion? Are we never to exchange with them, in other worlds, bright thought, or friendly greeting? These glorious creatures, whose words of wit and wisdom can never fade from earth, are yet they who uttered them, of no more value in the eyes of heaven, than the very urns that hold their ashes? And the brilliant crowds that hung on their accents, where are they? And the empires that they builded, and the ages that they adorned, and the homes that they made happy, have they, too. perished with them, no more to be recalled? lost, gone, swallowed up for ever, in the inexorable Past! So sings our noble bard, in that sublimest of invocations.

"Far in thy realm withdrawn,
Old empires sit in sullenness and gloom,
And glorious ages gone
Lie deep within the shadow of thy womb.

"In thy abysses hide Beauty and excellence unknown: to thee Earth's wonder and her pride Are gathered, as the waters to the sea.

"Full many a mighty name
Lurks in thy depths, unuttered, unrevered;
With thee are silent fame,
Forgotten arts, and wisdom disappeared."

Ay, but what else says the bard, a little further on, in that same divine poem of his?

"Thine for a space are they;
Yet shalt thou yield thy treasures up at last;
Thy gates shall yet give way,
Thy bolts shall fall, inexorable Past!

"All that of good and fair
Has gone into thy womb from earliest time,
Shall then come forth to wear
The glory and the beauty of its prime.

"They have not perished, no!

Kind words, remembered voices once so sweet,
Smiles, radiant long ago,
And features, the great soul's apparent seat,

"All shall come back---"

But whither am I wandering, and what has all this to do with the performances at the Lenæum? I ask pardon, my friend, but somehow or other these divine lines of Lucretius will come into my head, in spite of myself, whenever I enter a place, that recalls, as this does, the images of the illustrious dead. And is it strange, earnest, fervent, glorious verses that they are? Who can doubt that pensive travellers will be repeating them, ages and ages hence, as I have now; in this same spot, too, then perchance (who shall say?) abandoned of the Gods, and become, with all the sumptuous piles around it, a wilderness of shapeless ruins!

But what were they playing? I will tell you. On the occasion of our first visit, no less a piece than Æschylus's divine Agamemnon. Valeria and I read the play very carefully over together before going, determined to lose none of the beauties of the performance. Oh, what a magnificent work, Marcus! What grandeur of conception, what boldness of metaphor, what strength of passion, what sublime elevation of style every where pervade it! Those divine odes, too; solid, solid gold, every line of them. I know your enthusiastic ad-

miration of the tragedy of Greece, and so speak all the more freely. Never, indeed, till now did I appreciate its immeasurable superiority to our own. Take this very play, for instance, and compare it with the tinsel trash put forth under the same name by Seneca; the one, all false glitter, bombast, and frigidity; the other, steeped throughout with thought and passion. Nay, take the Thyestes itself, our acknowledged masterpiece, and what is there in it to be named in the same generation with that wonderful scene in this piece, where Cassandra pours forth her mingled laments and prophecies? What a conception! And oh, the inimitable plaintiveness of that dying speech of hers!

"Thou Sun, whose rising beams shall bless no more These closing eyes! You, whose vindictive rage Hangs o'er my hated murderers, oh, avenge me, Though, a poor slave, I fall an easy prey! This is the state of man: in prosperous fortune, A shadow, passing light, throws to the ground Joy's baseless fabric; in adversity, Comes malice with a sponge moistened in gall, And wipes each beauteous character away: More than the first, this melts my soul to pity."

That magnificent description, too, which Cly-

temnestra gives of the passage from peak to peak of the signal-light that announces the fall of Troy, what is there in all poetry to surpass it for vigor of diction and boundless variety of expression? That address of the chorus also to Jupiter, how simple and calm, yet sublime withal! I refer more particularly to the first antistrophe:

"He that, when conquest brightens round,
Swells the triumphal strain to Jove,
Shall ever with success be crowned.
Yet often when to wisdom's seat
Jove deigns to guide man's erring feet,
His virtues to improve,
He to affiction gives command
To form him with her chastening hand.
The memory of her rigid lore,
On the sad heart imprinted deep,
Attends him through day's active hour,
Nor in the night forsakes his sleep.
Instructed thus thy grace we own,
O thou that stifts on Heaven's high throne!"

Never shall I forget the charming manner in which these lines were given; the fine sonorous voices, the admirable accompaniment of the instruments, the perfect time kept throughout, the slow, stately dance, the superb costumes, the whole mise en scene, in short, absolutely perfect. And so throughout. But I must not dwell further upon the ten thousand beauties of this glorious tragedy. The parts of Clytemnestra and Agamemnon seemed to me to be rendered in the highest style of art; not a thought of the poet, however subtle or obvious, but what received its appropriate interpretation; and what was most charming to witness, not one that was not promptly recognized and appreciated by the audience. Take it altogether, it was the greatest intellectual treat I ever had.

The next time we went, we had an entertainment of a very different description, but I need not add, as inimitable in its way; being the immortal Clouds. Here again, I took good care to renew my acquaintance with the text beforehand; and in so doing, was again forced to confess, for the thousandth time, the same superiority of our Grecian brethren, in comedy, as in tragedy. Friend Corbulo, I know, would call me an obstinate heretic, for expressing such an opinion; while I, in return, look upon it as the veriest national prejudice in him to maintain the opposite one. Can there be any doubt about it? No man admires more

than I do the sprightly witticisms of our Cæcilius, or the elegant and decorous lines of our Terence, or enjoys more heartily the broad grins, so genuine and healthful withal, that old Plautus perpetually forces upon us; and yet what folly to compare their performances, as works of art, with such a play as the Clouds! How immeasurably inferior are they in depth and subtlety of thought, in intensity of sarcasm, and above all, in that amazing mastery of language of his! But I am not going to inflict any elaborate parallels upon you, or any superfluous criticisms upon this world-recognized masterpiece. The rendering of it, as of the Agamemnon, was all that could be desired. The part of Strepsiades was given with infinite humor, and the passages of wit between him and Socrates told with great effect upon the audience. That grand invocation to the Clouds-

[&]quot;Fly swift, ye clouds, and give yourselves to view! Whether on high Olympus's sacred top Snow-crowned ye sit, or in the azure vales Of your own father. Ocean sporting weave Your misty dance, or dip your golden urns In the seven mouths of Nile,"

and so following, was recited in a style worthy of such divine poetry. Their appearance in response to it, and the accompanying chorus, were equally admirable, as specimens of musical genius and of dramatic effect. The whole thing, indeed, was perfect, from the first appearance of the faint speck of cloud, floating in the distant air, to the gentle breathing of the flutes, and the scarce audible notes of the singers, up to the grand climax, where it suddenly bursts open, and reveals its troop of beautiful goddesses, who chant in full chorus, those superb verses in honor of Athens. The grouping, so artistic; the costumes, so rich and harmonious; the mystic dance that accompanied the music, with its perpetually shifting complications and evolutions, each more difficult and more beautiful than the other; the wonderfully expressive and elaborate pantomime at the close, all combined to produce an effect, which I will not presume to describe. Never, never were my eyes and ears, at once, so tasked and delighted. The dialogue between the two Causes, with the comments of the chorus, crowded as it is with all sorts of beauties, was brought out in high relief; not one of its pleasant fancies, or biting sarcasms, being lost upon the audience. The playful address to them by the Clouds, at the close of it, with its mingled threats and promises, according to their reception of the performance, was also very happily given. Oh, how different this entire scene from our wretched Roman translation and rendering of it! I could have wished, I confess, that some of the more indecent parts of the dialogue had been omitted in the representation, marvellously witty as they are. The audience generally, however, thought otherwise; nay, received them with the most unbounded gratification.

The next performance that we witnessed was the Antigone; but, my dear friend, I have already spun out my epistle to such an unconscionable length, that I must defer any mention of it to a future opportunity. Don't talk any more about your long letters, after this. Well, well, the Gods bring you safely to the end of it! Farewell.

IX.

VALERIA TO JULIA.

THOUGH it is hardly four days, dearest Julia, since I last wrote you, the spirit nevertheless moves me to send you a few lines, by the vessel that leaves this evening. Let me see. I concluded my epistle, I believe, by telling you of our purposed excursion to Marathon. You must know, then, that we carried out our intention the following day, and had a delightful time. The weather was charming, the road in excellent order, and the company most agreeable; that is to say, our own dear selves, of course (Octavia excepted, who is spending a few days with some young friends at Acharnæ), with the addition of the proconsul's amiable daughter Agrippina, and his handsome young son Caius, the centurion. Sempronius, who has been all kindness and attention to us, ever since our arrival, insisted on our using his carriage for the

journey; Caius and Publius being on horseback. The presence of Caius was invaluable to us, he being a military man, and familiar moreover, as he said, with every inch of the battle-ground. We were just about four hours in reaching the town, and after duly refreshing ourselves, at its picturesque and comfortable inn, spent nearly as many more in rambling over the plain. And a most delightful and never-to-be-forgotten ramble it was, my dear, I assure you. Battle-fields generally I have found pretty stupid and unsatisfactory places to visit, hurried about as one almost always is, from spot to spot, by some rascally chatterbox of a cicerone, whose veracity is hardly better than his grammar, and who, in the height of his parrottalk, is thinking only of the oboli of his victims. What can one do in such a case, but wonder, gape, fidget, and be right glad to have the job over? Oh, how different from the clear, graphic, animated description of our young officer! went into it, indeed, with all a soldier's enthusiasm, and as he kindled with his theme, we seemed to hear once more the shouts of the combatants, the neighing steeds, and the clangor of the trum-

pets, so vividly did he bring the stirring scene before us! As we wandered from mound to mound, or lingered amongst the venerable, but still magnificent trophies, that every where dot the plain, or stopped in mute admiration before the divine Miltiades of Phidias, or gazed upon the manifold memorials of the battle, in the beautiful temple of Apollo hard by, every where, indeed, was our young friend at hand, with his appropriate and lucid narrative, shedding a flood of light on every incident and association of the all-glorious day. At the tomb of Cynægirus, where, by the way, I gathered some most levely violets, we met a singular old genius, half-cicerone, half-beggar, who amused us vastly by his remarks, interspersed as they were with snatches of old ballads, and accompanied by most grotesque gestures. All of a sudden, at a signal given by Caius, who seemed to understand thoroughly the old fellow's humors, he desisted from his prattle, and chanted, in a fine ringing voice, an entire scenc from the Persæ. It was, indeed, most admirably rendered, and in such a spot, too, I need not say, its effect was really electric. Lucius, who is a passionate admirer of

Æschylus, was quite beside himself, and forthwith handed over a five-drachma piece to the performer in his enthusiasm, to the evident astonishment of the recipient. He then proceeded to cut a most superb stick from a wild pear-tree hard by, which, after appropriate inscriptions and embellishments, he intends as a present for Marcus. We did not leave the field till long after the sun had fallen behind Hymettus, and then betook ourselves for the night to a villa in the neighborhood, where a brother of the polemarch resides. Here we were most hospitably entertained. After supper we adjourned to the library, a charming little room, with a fine sea-view from its windows. Here our host. in reply to a question put by Lucius, took down his Herodotus, and read, in admirable style, the historian's glowing account of the battle. After which, he showed us his collection of Marathonian relics, which I cannot pretend to describe to you, thrice interesting as it was. Among them was quite an assortment of personal ornaments, one of which, a quaint and massive signet-ring, with a large ruby in it, he insisted upon my accepting; and all the more earnestly, he added, from his conviction of its authenticity. It certainly has a most genuine look about it; at any rate, I mean to hold fast to the belief, that it actually did sparkle, on that day of his downfall, from the cimitar-wielding hand of some gav and haughty Persian. Early next morning, we left our host's pleasant mansion, and on our return stopped to climb Pentelicus. We found mules already waiting for us at the foot of the hill. The ascent is by no means fatiguing or hazardous, and the view from the summit surpassingly beautiful and extensive, embracing, as it does, on the west, pretty much all Attica, from Mount Cythæron to Sunium, and on the east, ranging over the Ægean, from the blue hills of Ceos, just visible, on the right, to the fertile fields and shining towns of Eubœa, on the left. About half way to the top are the famous quarries, where we found hundreds of laborers busily employed in cutting and transporting the precious materials. We were very politely received by the superintendent, who took us all through the works, and showed us the various machinery used in them. It was most interesting to behold the ease, and skill, with which such huge masses were separated; to

say nothing of the neatness, and mathematical accuracy, and evident regard to economy, that every where prevailed. One magnificent cube of dazzling whiteness and colossal dimensions arrested our attention. On inquiring into its destination, we were told that it was intended for the pedestal of a colossal statue which the citizens are about erecting in honor of the Emperor, as the great promoter of Art, and by way of grateful recognition also, of the new life which his munificent patronage of it has given to all branches of industry in Athens. It is to be placed in a commanding position, on the slope of the mountain, directly in front of the entrance of the quarries, and looking towards the city. A good idea, is it not? Lucius was delighted with this part of our excursion, and as usual, quite enthusiastic. It would have been strange, certainly, had he not been, in such a spot ; the birthplace of so many illustrious images; from which so many sumptuous palaces and holy temples have been hewn. Had the Parthenon alone, that Iliad in marble, as Sempronius finely calls it, originated here, it would have sufficed to have made Pentelicus haunted, holy ground, to every

thoughtful traveller; but when we recall the numberless other shrines that have been sent forth from it, to adorn and bless all the provinces of Greece: the friezes, porticoes, triumphal arches innumerable, that have been wrought in it; when we recall the endless succession of Gods and demi-gods. kings, poets, sages, that have gone hence, to preside over and sanctify, not merely stately Athens, but all, even the most distant corners of the empire; when we think, too, of the long generations of illustrious ones, that are still slumbering here, to come forth at the bidding of genius, and go abroad on their glorious errands, even unto the ends of the earth; that are destined to kindle the patriot's zeal, and to inspire the bard, as he wanders along the banks of far-off rivers, yet unrevealed to the conqueror; the innumerable images of love, and grief, and terror, and majesty, and sublimity, into which future sculptors are yet to breathe the breath of life, and send them forth to instruct and delight the coming ages; when one thinks, I say, of all these things, would it not be marvellous, indeed, if the traveller did not feel a certain exaltation of spirit in a spot like this; a spot

expressly dedicated by the Gods to the worthy embodiment and commemoration of all that makes life dear and glorious? But this, my dear friend, is a theme far better suited to the strains of a Pindar, than to the rapturous commonplaces of a passing stranger; and so I must not presume to dwell upon it.

Remounting our mules, we soon reached the top of the hill, and after duly enjoying the magnificent panorama at our feet, we descended by another and somewhat steeper path, and soon regaining our carriage, were whirled rapidly along the Via Nova, re-entering the city by the beautiful gate of Trajan. The first thing that met our eyes, at our lodgings, was a package from Drusus containing your and Marcus's pleasant letters, and little Cincinnatus's miniature. What a capital likeness! That arabesque border, too, is a perfect love. Drusus called again, in the evening. I was right sorry to see him looking so delicate. He leaves for Bithynia, he says, day after to-morrow.

Yesterday was rather a quiet day with us, Lucius having spent the greater part of it at the Areopagus, where a criminal trial of great interest

has been going on, for some days past. It seems that a young priest of Bacchus, much beloved in the town, for his amiability and his many charities, was murdered about a month since, under circumstances of great atrocity; and that the crime has been laid to the charge of an old citizen, of hitherto unblemished reputation, and who has, moreover, filled several offices of dignity in the The motive assigned for the commonwealth. murder, is the possession, and threatened disclosure, by the deceased, of certain facts, going to show that a will, whereby the accused is known to have received an immense legacy, was a forgery; to avoid the ignominy of which exposure, he has been driven to commit the desperate act in question. The evidence, Lucius says, is all but convincing against him; and though he has secured the services of Eubulides, the great criminal lawyer of Athens, it will be of little avail to him, he thinks. It was to hear this famous orator, that Lucius went, yesterday. He was charmed with the speech, he said, both as a specimen of subtle reasoning, and of impassioned delivery; but in spite of it, and of the miserably inefficient reply

of the counsel for the prosecution, he will be greatly surprised, he says, if the prisoner escapes the hemlock.

Sempronius accompanied Agrippina and myself yesterday, to the studio of Chrysippus, in order to show us a series of high reliefs, which he has just executed, in fulfilment of a commission from Antoninus. It was our last opportunity, he said, as they are to be sent to Rome, to-morrow. They are four in number, and illustrate incidents in the life of Phocion. We were charmed with They are executed in a grand style, the expression being concentrated on a few figures, and all superfluous ornaments being carefully avoided, as out of keeping with the subject. The first represents Phocion interfering to save Æschines from the fury of the people, as invoked against him by Demosthenes, in their famous quarrel. The different features and characteristics of the three orators, Sempronius thought, were expressed with great discrimination. The second represents his memorable interview with Alexander, wherein he persuades him to turn his arms against Persia, instead of shedding the blood of his Greek brethren. Here again the contrast between the two prominent figures, is very finely brought out. third is Phocion at home, receiving the prince's ambassadors, who are sent to bribe him. charming, charming piece! Phocion's wife introduced in it, and two of his grandchildren; one of them the loveliest little figure I ever beheld. The last, and finest of them all, is the death-scene, where the patriot takes the cup, and as he drinks the fatal draught, prays for the prosperity of Athens, and the forgiveness of his enemies. The attitude and expression of the venerable hero, the nobility of nature that illuminates his countenance. in this last, trying scene, seem to me to be in the very highest style of art. You must not fail to go and see them, my dear, the very first opportunity. Marcus, I am sure, will be delighted with them.

After our call at Chrysippus's, we had a delightful walk in the gardens of the Academy; on the whole, about the pleasantest ones that I ever was in. Not that they have any thing like the extent of those of the Esquiline, or the cumbrous magnificence of those of Sallust; still less,

are they enlivened by any such superb fountains, or can boast of any such boundless variety of trees and flowers, as the Imperial ones at Tibur; at the same time, there is a certain indefinable charm about them, an air of ease, and elegance, and dignified tranquillity, that I miss in the others. I need not tell you, that they are laid out with exquisite taste, that the prospects through their avenues are most beautiful, that the statues and monuments that adorn them, are almost without exception, masterpieces, and that the company you meet in them is the very best in Athens. The day was a superb one, and tempted us to linger among the venerable plane-trees, listening, now to the merry music of the birds above us, now to the pleasant murmurs of the Cephissus, and now to the still pleasanter stream of talk, that flowed from the excellent Sempronius. A capital talker, Julia. I know no one, moreover, who so adroitly manages to smuggle in so much downright instruction amongst his pleasantries; fairly beguiling you into wisdom, by the agreeable paths along which he leads you. The value of such a companion in such a spot, is indeed inestimable. He seems

positively to know Athens, and all her haunts and memories, by heart, and never wearies of talking about them. It not being the hour for lecturing. we entered the school, where we admired more than ever, the beautiful frescoes that adorn its walls, and the superb collection of busts of illustrious Academicians, from Democritus down to the present day, that lines its corridors. you know, are some of the most famous works of Parrhasius, and though it is almost six centuries since they were painted, they are actually as vivid and intelligible, as if done yesterday. I say intelligible, though none of his pictures are very easily made out at first, so crowded are they with figures and ideas: painfully so, indeed, to me, Then again, there is such a profusion of allegory, such a veil of learning thrown over his groups, that the sentiment quite evaporates, in the arduous process of unfathoming their mysteries. But above all, there is a terrible lack of loving, gentle, beautiful figures in his pieces, and an over-fondness for the fierce, the violent, and the sarcastic. Very presumptuous, is it not, Julia, in a young woman like me, to pick flaws thus, in the works of a master,

whom the whole world has for ages consented to worship? I can't help it. I must speak out my honest sentiments, though I be laughed at for my pains. The finest modern painting here, Sempronius says, is the Apotheosis of Socrates, which adorns the ceiling of one of the smaller rooms. We had but a hurried glance at it; enough, however, to make us anxious to renew our acquaintance with it. It is the work of Antiphilus, who is now employed, if I mistake not, in decorating the Imperial palace at Neapolis.

But nothing, after all, in the gardens, gave me so much gratification as Phidias's Anaxagoras, that world-renowned masterpiece, and pride of the Academy. I lack words, indeed, to express my admiration. Such ease, such serenity, such a blending of acuteness and benevolence, in that countenance! The very beau ideal of a philosopher, of a man who cheerfully turned his back on wealth and honors, at the same time that he was ready to seek truth, at the very ends of the earth; preferring, as he nobly expressed it, a grain of wisdom to heaps of gold. So ought the man to have looked, too, who uttered those delicious dying words. You remember them, of course,

Julia; his friends, leaning over his pillow, just as the scene was closing, asked him if he wished aught done in commemoration of him; 'yes,' said he, 'give the boys a holiday on the anniversary of my death.' Charming, charming valediction! I verily believe I should have kissed the dear old soul's statue, in my enthusiasm, had not Sempronius been by.

But I might run on in this way for a week, my dear Julia, chatting about all the notable and beautiful things in these pleasant gardens; the reverently preserved house of Plato, with its inscription; his sumptuous monument; the noble statue of Socrates; the bower of Euclid; the exquisite miniature temple of the Graces; the famous tomb of Polemo and Crates, where the philosophers, inseparable in life, repose side by side; and a host of others, equally interesting; forgetting how familiar you already are with most of them, or if not, how many volumes there are in Marcus's library, that you can readily turn to, and find something far more to the purpose concerning them.

We have just received a very polite invitation

to pass a few days at Corinth, with some Roman friends who are residing there, and have concluded to accept it. We shall probably leave day after to-morrow, stopping a day at Eleusis, to see the temple, and other objects of interest there, and possibly another at Megara; though Sempronius tells us, that there is not much in the latter place to detain the traveller. Octavia and Publius will, of course, accompany us. Octavia wishes me to say, by the way, that she laughed heartily over cousin Marcellina's funny letter, and that she will answer it soon. She begins to sing her hymns and say her prayers, almost as well in Greek, as in Latin.

Publius, I believe, is writing to Caius, by the same trireme as this goes by. It is high time for me to stop, especially as I have written you so recently. Give all our best loves to dear Marcus, and thousands of kisses to the little Roman darlings. Farewell.

X.

PUBLIUS TO CAIUS.

Your curious communication, dear Uncle Caius, came duly to hand, and I need not tell you how glad I was to get it. I began to think you had forgotten me. The oysters, also, of which it speaks, have made their appearance, and Father desires me to tender thanks therefor. They were tip-top, I assure you; far before any that these classic coasts can boast of; at any rate, those I have seen here, have been miserable little affairs, all eye, and no flavor. In fact, I don't think much of the Athenian fish generally, or of the way in which they cook them; always excepting the anchovies, which are certainly very pretty eating. Confound this parchment, it's as rough as a grater.

Well, I suppose you think, Uncle C., that I ought to have all sorts of entertaining things to tell you, in reply to your pleasant missive. And

yet, somehow or other, my budget don't seem to be overstocked. Between ourselves, I had quite as lief be back in Rome, as poking about this stupid, literary old town. Oh, how Pa would blow me up for talking so! I can't help it; murder will out. I do think it a most infernally dull place, compared with home; no such theatres, no such eireuses, no such turnouts, no such parades, no such fun of all sorts. I have seen a little good sparring, in the Ceramicus, I confess; and here and there a cock-fight, worth betting on; but very seldom though. And then again, I miss the fruit-stands, and the flower-markets, and the fountains, and the fireworks, and the puppet-shows, and above all, the confectioneries. Oh, how I wish I was with you at Piso's, this morning! How we used to walk into those quail pâtés, ch, Uncle C., and those Carthaginian biseuits; that Massilia eordial, too; body of Baeehus, what a delicious preparation! I know it's in very bad taste for me to talk so, or even to think of these things, when I ought to be devoting myself to the pictures, and the sculpture, and the antiquities, and the lectures, and all the other intellectual dainties here. So it is, though, and so it will be, in spite of all Pa and Ma's scolding. The Gods never meant me for a student, and it's all folly, trying to force nature.

My Greek is getting on very, very slowly. The shopkeepers here, evidently don't know what to make of it. I went into a tailor's shop yesterday, to get a tunic, but in spite of all my vocal and pantomimic efforts, could not succeed in conveying my meaning to the clerk, and so had to give it up as a bad job. A few doors further on, I repeated the experiment, seduced by the magic words, Roman spoken here, over the entrance. This, I presently found, was a mere trick to catch a traveller, and was again compelled to retire in disgust, after a still more absurd scene than before. The other day, too, I went into a restaurant in Theseus-street, and called, as I supposed (certainly, designed), for a cup of wine, and an omelette; and what think you, after a most unreasonable delay, the scoundrel of a slave brought me? A Thessalian rare-bit, recking with pepper and garlic; a dish I perfectly detest; and for the wine, a black, gruel-like mixture, compared with which cider vinegar was nectar. Whether this was really done through misapprehension, or out of sheer mischief, I know not; but I got angry, I confess, and after firing off a volley of maledictions, half Greek, half Latin, to the great edification of the by-standers, was but too happy to beat a retreat. Hereafter, I shall carry my phrase-book with me, wherever I go.

I spoke to the old gentleman, by the way, as you desired, about the Menander. I don't know that I ought to tell you; but he has bought you a superb copy; all the hundred and fifty plays, complete in thirty rolls, with the original casts and stage directions. He has ordered a cedar box expressly for them, with your name on the outside, in gold letters. From a hint dropped by Mother, I half inferred that he designs it as a birthday present. As to the Turf Register, non est. They tell me there's been no such document published here since the days of Mark Antony; and, to say truth, I have seen no running here worth recording; nothing, certainly, to be named in the same age with that at the Circus Maximus, There are some good horses, too, about town. Pa bought me a

first-rate Parthian pony, the other day, for twenty-five darics (about twenty solidi, our money), one of the nicest creatures I ever straddled. He took me down to the Piræus, yesterday morning, within the half hour, easy; a distance of nearly six miles, including a detention of five minutes at the gates.

You must know that tableaux are all the rage here, just now. We had them at our house last night; some serious, some funny ones. They went off quite well, young Caius, the proconsul's son, being the stage-manager on the occasion. The first group was Pœtus and Arria, in which Mother really looked lovely as Arria. Then we had Baucis and Philemon, Damon and Pythias, Cornelia showing her jewels (the writer being the prominent gem), Glaucus and Ione, the coronation of Virgil, and several others. The second part was comic, including Diogenes and his landlady, Socrates and Xantippe, the Reading of the Will, Pyramus and Thisbe, in which Octavia rigged me up as Thisbe, in the most absurd fashion, Taming of the Shrew, The entertainments concluded with an etc., etc. acting charade, wherein your humble servant personated a hippopotamus, with distinguished success.

You ask about our theatricals. Of course, you

are aware that there is but one theatre here of any pretensions. Father and Mother are both quite enthusiastic about it, and say they never saw plays performed so well before. I went with them, the other day, to see the Frogs. They were charmed; but with my poor pennyworth of Greek, I needn't say, that the wit was pretty much thrown away upon me. Not but what there was some fun, too; especially when the man came in on the jackass with his baggage at the end of a pole; (the idea of carrying baggage to hell, ha, ha, ha!) and then, when they brought in the big scales to weigh the poetry in! The richest thing, though, was where the frogs danced the Grasshopper Polka in the intervals between the croaking. The music was capital. I must get Octavia to send you the notes. In fact, it was the only really lively Greek air that I have heard here; their music generally being altogether too solemn and scientific to suit me. Your old Etrurian ballads for my money, Caius; Blue-eyed Acca, All round my Toga, Old King Porsenna, those are the jockeys for me. I can dance and whistle to them all night; but these choral odes are very apt to put me to sleep.

They have a floating theatre down at the Piræus, that I am ashamed to say I am Goth enough to prefer to the Lengum. It is mainly patronized by sailors, and the entertainments are of a highly miscellaneous character. They generally begin with a farce not very long, but decidedly broad; after which comes some very fair ground and lofty tumbling; then they invariably give us some real oldfashioned Fescennine verses, which bring down the house in great style; the principal singer being a ruddy old fellow, weighing about a ton, and the most astonishing mimic I ever heard. Nothing comes amiss to him, from the chirp of the cricket to the roar of the lion. He's a prodigious favorite. they tell me; and there is not a port in the Peloponnesus where he has been allowed to pay for a meal for the last ten years. Dancing, of a somewhat piquant character, is the closing item of the bill of fare. The scale of prices is so very peculiar a one that I copy it verbatim from the placards for your edification : Admittance, one drachma ; children under forty years of age, three obols; in arms, two obols; sucklings, an obol. Well discriminated, is it not? Ah, dear, I don't know

when I have had more fun than I did there the other afternoon. I haven't roared so, Caius, since our famous masquerading frolic last Saturnalia.

I saw some good turkey shooting the other day just outside the gate of Themistocles; crossbows, fifty yards distance, half a drachma a shot. I thought I might as well try my hand at it, with the rest, and to my great amazement actually succeeded in driving my arrow twice successively right through the fowl's brains. I was quite a demigod, I tell you, among the crowd for about five minutes. Unfortunately, though, the affair somehow or other came to the old gentleman's ears, and he read me a pretty severe lecture on the subject. It was high time, he said, for me to give up this rambling, worthless kind of life, and these low associates that I seemed to be so fond of; that the moment we returned from Corinth (for which place we leave in a day or two to make a short visit), he should insist upon my commencing a thorough reform; that he was determined to have me go through a regular course of studies and gymnastics at the Lyceum; that he had already spoken with the gymnasiarch on the subject; that

I must also take regular music and drawing lessons with Octavia; and that he moreover should be very much disappointed and vexed if I did not, every morning before breakfast, recite to him at least five and twenty lines of Greek poetry and a fable of Æsop, besides demonstrating a proposition in Euclid.

Whew! there's a revolution for you, Caius! Well, well, the dear old soul is right, and I must e'en set about the good work in earnest. Mother has this moment stepped in to say, that having sealed her letter, she wishes me to acknowledge the receipt, about an hour since, of a long and pleasant epistle from cousin Julia, which she will answer I inclose a bill of lading for a small parcel, containing a gold necklace, which Octavia sends to little Marcellina, and a study-lamp, which I wish you to present to cousin Marcus, with my respects. They will go by the same vessel that takes this, scilicet, the A No. 1, clipper-built and copper-bottomed trireme Ajax, Bibo commander, which leaves for Ostia at sunset precisely. I hope the lamp will be acceptable to cousin M., though, at first blush, the pattern may strike him as somewhat grotesque. Look out for the Menander by the next vessel.

Hollo! the Asia is in, and the Heralds are chanting her news about the streets, right lustily. What is that fellow saying? Emperor no better; Flour down, at Alexandria; Rebellion in Batavia; Five millions of solidi on the way from Hispania; Great fire at Mediolanum;—but the old gentleman is calling to me to go down to the banker's, and so no more nonsense for to-day. Write soon again, my dear fellow, and so, with all our best loves, Farewell.

XI.

MARCUS SERTORIUS TO LUCIUS VIRGINIUS.

Many thanks, my dear Lucius, for your long and pleasant letter of the Nones, received a day or two since. We are right glad to find you all so well and happy. I wish I had as agreeable news for you, in return, but alas, I have not. Oh, Lucius, how pained you will be, when I tell you that our dear and excellent friend, Cornelius, is dead. He died last night, after an illness of about two months. His health had been failing, indeed, as you are aware, for more than a year past; though not so as to prevent his going about, and partaking somewhat in his customary avocations and enjoyments. More recently, however, his disease (the precise nature of which his physicians do not seem to have agreed upon), had assumed a more active and malignant character, and his constitution has fallen before it at last; a constitution, never very robust, and only preserved, so long as it was, by his uniformly calm, wise, and temperate plan of life. He died very peacefully, with hardly any appearance of suffering, and conscious almost to the last. I had seen him the day previous; and though he looked very pale and emaciated, and spoke with difficulty, there was yet a serene and noble expression upon his countenance, which told us that all was well within. Never shall I forget the sweet smile that played over it, or that warm, thrilling grasp of the hand, at the moment of our final parting. Julia was with me. Poor thing, she was terribly overcome.

I need not tell you, my dear friend, of the interest that Cornelius has ever manifested for us both, the ten thousand acts of kindness that he has showered upon us. A few days before his death (so his excellent son Cneius was telling me this morning) he summoned his household to his bedside, and took leave of them, in an address, most touching and beautiful; modestly reviewing his past life, thanking the Gods for their many blessings, and expressing his entire resignation to their will, and the liveliest faith in immortality;

counselling his dear children to live together in peace, and finally blessing them, in words all made up of love and gentleness and wisdom. Thus sweetly, thus serenely has our dear friend sunk to rest, and is e'en now reposing, who can doubt it, with the blessed in Elysium! Bear with me, Lucius, while I dwell for a moment on some of those traits that so adorned, so endeared him to us all!

And first, his integrity; how perfect, how lofty was it! I do not believe the man ever drew breath in Rome, who more faithfully pursued what he thought the right path; who more promptly or heartily rejected the idea of compromise with the clearly ascertained dictates of conscience.

What purity of character, too! Who indeed, so free as he, from all licentiousness of act, or thought? Whose conversation so unstained by aught that was unseemly? How conspicuously did this virtue shine forth in him, in these dissolute days of ours!

His piety, how sincere, how unaffected! How free from all taint of bigotry, or of a spirit of persecution! Looking to the hearts and lives, and not to the professions of his brethren, he never presumed to dictate to them the articles of their faith, or the forms of their prayers; and while, from the force of habit, and early education, he was warmly attached to the simple, unostentatious rites of the shrine of Concord, or of Vesta, he could none the less respect and love those, who preferred the splendid ceremonies of the Capitoline, or of the temple of Apollo. Even the poor persecuted Christian found in him a gentle and patient listener, nor did he withhold his words and acts of kindness from the despised Jew himself. So humble, so tolerant was he!

Humility, indeed, was the crowning ornament of our dear friend's character. No man ever prided himself less on those gifts of nature, and of fortune, which were so largely bestowed on him; no man ever sought less to thrust his opinions on his neighbors, or to extort their envy or applause. A noble simplicity pervaded his every action. He had his own views, indeed, on all subjects of importance; views formed with singular care and candor and deliberation; nor did he hesitate to express them, right manfully, and zealously, on all

proper occasions; yet ever with courtesy, and a willingness to be convinced. When overcome by the better judgment, or set right by the superior knowledge of his adversary, which was not often the case, it was delightful to see the cordial way in which he acknowledged his error, and his uniform preference of truth to victory. A true lover of his country, he was not blind to her faults and her vices; nor could any selfish considerations ever silence him, when some stupendous fraud, or unjust conquest, had fairly aroused his honest indignation. With the same generous warmth, did he denounce private iniquity, wherever he met it, but with no tincture of bitterness.

Our friend certainly was not, nor affected to be, what you would call a brilliant character. He poured forth no sparkling sarcasms; he uttered no profound maxims; he had no taste for the subtle disputations of the schools; nor did he win any laurels as a soldier or a statesman, a poet or an orator. But he had what was far better than them all, sterling good sense, and an unimpeachable integrity; qualities which made him an invaluable counsellor, and of which his friends freely

availed themselves. No man in Rome, I believe, ever fulfilled more onerous or responsible trusts than he did, or more to the satisfaction of all parties; while no man ever discharged his duties as a citizen, with more alacrity or faithfulness.

I have said that our dear friend was no orator; and yet, Lucius, you and I have both heard him, when aroused on some genial theme, express himself with admirable ease and energy, and employ language, that the most illustrious orator would willingly have adopted. Many of his letters, too, seem to me to be models of practical wisdom; while all of them, even the most trifling, charmingly reveal the writer's warmth and goodness of heart.

Yes, what an amiable and genial nature was his! What a pleasant smile, and cordial greeting he ever had, for those about him! How delightful in all his domestic relations; the kindest of patrons, the most humane of masters. How he loved children, too! A real hearty frolic with them, he used to say, was worth more than all the honors of the Forum. No man ever kept Sigillaria with more gusto; not a youngster about him, bond

or free, whose stocking did not then bear witness to his kind remembrance. He seemed to know, too, by heart, all the birth-days of his little kinsfolk, and to take especial delight in lighting up their countenances with his love-tokens. I need not tell you, Lucius, how hospitable a man he was; how happy it made him to see his friends enjoying themselves around him, alike in town, and in that delightful villa of his upon the Tiber. A dear lover of the country, how delighted he always was to escape from the din and glare of the metropolis to the repose and beauty of nature.

This is but a faint and meagre sketch, my friend, I am aware, of a character worthy, indeed, of the pencil of a Livy, or a Tacitus; yet such as it is, I am sure it will not be unacceptable to you, who so loved and valued the subject of it, and who so well know the heartfelt gratitude and respect that have prompted it.

You will be happy to learn that our dear friend has left a very handsome estate to his excellent family, and that he has generously provided in his will, for many useful and benevolent enterprises, some of which he had already enriched by his munificence. The funeral takes place day after tomorrow, and though, at his special request, it will be conducted in the plainest manner, all Rome's best citizens will be present, I doubt not, in the procession; so sincere and universal, here, is the feeling of his worth.

My heart is too full of my theme, Lucius, to speak of aught else to-day. I will write soon again. Meanwhile the Gods ever keep and bless you! Farewell.

XII.

SERTORIUS TO VIRGINIUS.

In my last letter to you, dear Lucius, it was my sad office to record the death of one of the best of men Far different is the announcement I have to make to you this morning. Ælius Verus is no more. Yes, thank the Gods, Rome is rid at last of one of the most profligate and dangerous of her citizens. He died of apoplexy, brought on, of course, by his abominable excesses. He was at his villa, near town, at the time of the attack, and at table, they say, with his brother revellers. At the very height of the debauch he was suddenly struck down, and after remaining two days in a perfectly unconscious state, expired. He presented, so Pætus tells me, a most sad and loathsome spectacle in death, the body being frightfully bloated, and the countenance wearing a fierce and brutal expression, all the more repulsive, he said, from

the dainty perfumes with which it was anointed, the beautiful flowers that surrounded it, and the magnificent robes in which the corpse was dressed. Poor Verus! You and I can remember the time, Lucius, when there was not a finer specimen of manly beauty in all Rome; a man of wit and talent, too, and of great apparent amiability; but the continued debaucheries of the last two years seem to have completely brutalized both mind and body.

Pætus went on to give me a pretty sarcastic description of the funeral, which, he said, was the most showy and costly he ever saw; there being no less than a thousand torch-bearers, and an incredible number of slaves, mutes, and hired singers.

The car was loaded down, he says, with gold and purple ornaments, and the Imperial band performed wonders on the occasion. When I tell you that the funeral oration was delivered by the dissolute Licinius, you can readily imagine what a frigid and declamatory affair it must have been, and how stuffed with falsehoods. I forget how many hundrod weight of spices and perfumes were

thrown upon the pile, which was constructed exclusively of the most costly woods. No less than fifty pairs of gladiators, Pætus says, were cutting each others' throats, at one time, around the flames. This most solemn and appropriate part of the services being over, the ashes of the wretch were duly washed with the choicest Falernian that the cellars of the Palatine could furnish. The urn he described as being a most elaborate and exquisite piece of workmanship, and costing the round sum of ten talents.

Ten talents! What would Cincinnatus, think you, have said to such an expenditure? He would have begrudged it, I fear, even to the holiest vestal, the purest patriot that ever adorned our annals; but to squander such a sum on the ashes of an infamous debauchee, what language could the old hero have found for his indignation at such impious mockery? What would he have said, too, had he been told that this same drunkard and libertine was an especial favorite at court; nay, had he lived, that he would in all probability have been our next sovereign? But I cannot bear to dwell on a theme so painful. As to the Emperor's

condition, I have nothing definite or satisfactory to tell you. The bulletins in the Forum are very brief and ambiguous in their statements. The only inference I can draw from the various stories and rumors current about town is, that his brain is in a very sad condition, and that his recovery is pretty much despaired of.

I was in at Arrian's an evening or two since. There was quite a little gathering there; among them, our eccentric friends, Lepidus, the progressive, and Philippus, the croaker. They seemed to have the conversation pretty much to themselves; the rest of us looking on and enjoying the fun; our host especially, who, you know, is a very dry, quiet person, and though a capital talker, if need be, generally prefers to draw out the humors of those about him. I need not tell you what impulsive, extravagant, metaphor-loving fellows both Philippus and Lepidus are, when they get fairly warmed up. When I entered, they were discussing the future prospects of Rome and the world in the year of the city twenty-five hundred. wouldn't undertake to repeat a hundredth part of what was said; nor would it be worth the trouble,

indeed, amusing and absurd as it was, at the time. Lepidus certainly drew a most rose-colored picture of the metropolis at that period. Rome, he thought, would then be so large, that it would take a crow at least half a day to fly across it, in any direction. A thousand gates would hardly suffice to accommodate the streams of life that would be continually flowing in and out of it. I forget how many hundreds of thousands of soldiers he manned its walls with. He went on to speak of Fora, and markets, and mausolea, and palaces, and aqueducts, and fountains of unprecedented magnitude and splendor, that were to spring up in all quarters; of temples, compared with which that of Capitoline Jove would seem a mere barn; and of domes, which would dwindle Agrippa's into a very pigeon-house; and of baths, to which those of Titus, sumptuous as we thought them, would be as barracks. He spoke of a Colosseum that would seat a million; of a central park of at least fifty thousand acres; of an university fifty-fold larger and more opulent than that of Tusculum, and with all manner of new professorships in it; of innumerable discoveries in art and science; of

astounding improvements in agriculture and all other cultures; of free-schools and gratuitous lectures in every one of the hundred wards of the city; of ingenious contrivances for multiplying and circulating cheap books, and all other comforts, mental and bodily, all through the Empire. content with these extravagances, he spoke of many queer and monstrous things, which he yet predicted would be potent realities, long before that period; of iron horses, which, eating no oats, would nevertheless draw their hundreds of travellers fifty miles the hour; of strange ships, cutting their way through the water without sails or oars, and having still stranger contrivances on board for finding where they were, when there was neither star to be seen above them nor land around them: of mysterious gases, underlying all the streets and lanes of the metropolis, and penetrating to the loftiest chambers of its houses, and which, by the mere turning of a button, and applying of a taper, would, in the twinkling of an eye, illuminate vast theatres. He spoke, too, of a cunningly devised apparatus for robbing Jove's own bolts of their terrors, and for pressing them into the service of human industry. This last sally was almost too much for our gravity; but when he went on to talk about bringing down the blessed Apollo himself from heaven, and turning him into a portrait painter for the masses, at less than a denarius the head, an irrepressible shout of laughter burst forth from us all. Nothing daunted, however, Lepidus continued his predictions, winding up, at last, with some most extraordinary statistics, in the way of prices, population, and army, navy, and treasury returns.

Philippus was quite as ultra, and as grotesque, in the other direction. Not a word of truth could he see in any of these prophecies. On the contrary, he believed that poor old Rome would be pretty much blotted out of existence, at the period referred to. (Why they selected A. U. C. 2500 I don't know.) She had clearly seen her best days, and, like the Emperor, was afflicted with a malady that was destroying her. A very few centuries, he thought, at most, would tell the tale. This was no subject, to be sure, to be cracking impertinent and heartless jokes about, but he couldn't help laughing at Lepidue's absurd estimates and fancy-sketches.

The idea that property up among the Alban hills would ever be worth ten talents an acre! No, no; had he said that the Palatine itself would one day be bought for far less than Evander gave for it, when he first came over from Arcadia, he would have been much nearer the truth. He verily believed it himself; nay, more, he believed that the proud palace which covered it, would vet become a lodging place for owls and foxes; and that silly shepherds would yet tend their flocks in that very spot beneath whose storied roofs wise philosophers were now poring over their parchments. He did not believe that a single one of all those fanciful palaces and towers and temples, with which Lepidus had adorned the hundred wards of the city. would ever see the light; or that university, with its hundred professorships, that was to put Tusculum to the blush; or that Colosseum, with its million spectators. Far, far more likely was it, that the present Colosseum would long ere then become a misshapen mass of ruins, and that ragged children would be gathering blackberries among its shattered arches. Grieve and grumble as we might over such a future, he yet believed

that the Gods had it in store for us; yes, that the proud pillar of Trajan itself was yet destined to overlook a dreary wilderness; that the Imperial Villa, with all its varied piles, and countless treasures, would become a wreck so thorough that no antiquarian lore could fathom its mysteries; that all the sparkling fountains about us would cease their music, and the aqueducts, that brought their waters hither from the green hills around, lie shattered and buried beneath vile weeds; that scarce a mosaic would be left to tell the story of all those regal baths, now so populous with idlers and voluptuaries; in a word, that long before the century referred to saw the light, all the wealth, trade, power, pith, heart, soul of Rome would be clean gone out of her; would be diverted to far distant lands, that we now looked down upon with disdain, as barbarians, or even to yet more remote realms, yet undiscovered, where no human footstep had ever trod. After airing a few more extravagances of this nature, he appealed to our host, if his were not by far the more just view of the Whereupon Arrian made a few remarks, very different, certainly, in their character from those of either speaker; drawing the line, as I thought, very judiciously between their absurd extremes. I shall not undertake to repeat them, however.

I was honored yesterday by a call from the youthful Aurelius. I had been making some inquiries, the day before, of Antoninus, concerning certain old historical manuscripts in his possession, which refer to events during the reign of Ancus Martius, and copies of which I had not been able to find, either at the Ulpian or at the Palatine, or even at the Octavian, so famous, you know, for its old editions. He at once promised to hunt them up for me, and who should bring them yesterday but his young kinsman himself? What a charming lad he is! So handsome, so bright, so modest, and so wonderfully well read, for his years, both in poetry and philosophy! Julia was delighted with him. He has already written some moral essays, they say, of great merit, and which the Emperor has spoken of with marked approbation. know how it was, but the idea kept forcing itself upon me continually, while listening to his sprightly talk, and watching his beautiful features, that

this rare young creature was yet destined to play a splendid part in the world's history. Nay, I even saw in imagination, the imperial crown upon that noble brow of his, and the glorious old days of Rome revived under his beneficent government. The thought, indeed, so haunted me, that I could not resist mentioning it to Julia, after he left; but an incredulous smile was her only recognition of this prophetic vision of mine. Ah, dear, no such luck for Rome, I fear!

Yesterday being the birthday of Marcellus, the Prefect gave his customary banquet in its honor. I had an invitation to it, and though not very partial to such gatherings, could not well absent myself under the circumstances. It was a superb affair. The room was most appropriately ornamented, the famous old Carthaginian tapestry, which depicts the hero's exploits, lining the walls as usual, and the statue by Apollodorus, occupying a conspicuous position behind the couch of the Prefect. This last is a noble work of art, though hardly equal, I think, to his Vespasian. It is intended for one of the corridors of the new theatre, of which I spoke in a previous letter. The

supper itself was a masterpiece, far beyond my powers of appreciation, indeed; nor will I undertake to describe it. The prominent piece of confectionery, the siege of Syracuse, took all eyes captive with its elaborate splendors, and as Sallustius said, reflected almost as much honor on the genius of the cook, as the defence of the town itself did on that of Archimedes. The couches were spread for a hundred and fifty, and among the guests were some of our first citizens, and several distinguished strangers. I was fortunate enough to occupy the same couch with your young Athenian friend, Herodes, and was quite charmed with the wit and elegance of his conversation. He had a good deal to say about you and yours. You will be right glad to learn that his course of lectures at the Athenæum here on the Greek Poets is meeting with the most brilliant success. A sentiment in honor of Greece brought him to his feet, on this occasion, and his speech was wonderfully graceful and happy. Your humble servant, by the way, was also called on, most unexpectedly, to respond to another, in honor of Tacitus, and though he acquitted himself very indifferently, was kindly received. The music was capital. I don't think I ever heard Jove save the Emperor more finely rendered, than it was this time, in due response to The memory of Romulus, The day we celebrate was assigned to Licinius, whose eulogy on the great commander was very artistically constructed, and, at times, highly eloquent. Not only the hero himself, but all the illustrious ones of that name, so dear to Rome, were fitly commemorated. After the eulogy. Priscus recited an ode which he had composed expressly for the occasion, and with electric effect. He wields a pen of fire, this Priscus, and his delivery is perfection. There's been no such poetry in Rome for a century. I shan't fail to send you a copy. I wish I could remember the passage, where he describes the blended feelings of grief, admiration, exultation, with which Hannibal surveys his dying foe; dying, with a proud smile upon his face, and with murmured words of thanksgiving to the Gods, for a departure so glorious. It was, indeed, inimitable. There were one or two other pieces recited during the evening, among them an exceedingly humorous one by the Prefect himself, which fairly brought down the house, as you Athenians would say. It was almost midnight before I left, having had, on the whole, a truly delightful time.

But if I am to send this off by to-day's courier, I must stop where I am. Caius desires me to thank Publius for his pleasant letter just received. He hopes there are more of the same sort in contemplation. Remember us, most affectionately, to all under your roof. Farewell.

XIII.

SERTORIOUS TO VIRGINIUS.

This is my regular day, I believe, for writing you, my dear Lucius; and a right rainy one it is. have not ventured out, but have spent the greater part of the morning, reading Tacitus. I intended to have occupied it differently, indeed, but a volume of the divine historian happening to lie on the table, I took it up, and was made prisoner forth-What a master, what a master! Who is there like him, Lucius, after all? Who, from Herodotus down, can lay claim to any such variety of excellence, as he? Who so impartial in his judgments, so clear in his conceptions, so vivid in his narrations, so lofty in his principles, and above all, so true and hearty in his sympathies? melting the reader to tears, now making him glow with indignation; an indignation, too, ever enlisted on the side of truth and goodness. Where

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else can we find, and in such compact sentences, such withering, crushing denunciations of the oppressor, and the criminal? At the same time, too, who more prompt to recognize any latent spark of virtue, any the least redeeming grace of character, even in the very vilest of whom he speaks?

The volume I stumbled upon this morning, was that book of the History, which is devoted to the reign of Titus; that reign so brief, so sad, and yet, so glorious! With what skill, and what gusto, does he bring out all the manifold excellences of that most amiable of princes! His humanity, his generosity, his filial piety, his uniform kindness to that infamous, treacherous brother, his affable, winning manners, his princely entertainments, his munificent patronage of art and letters; the splendid baths, and temples, and gardens with which he enriched Rome, the noble reforms he consummated, and the still grander schemes of utility and benevolence that he was planning, when so untimely snatched away! How he loves to describe him, as he goes about the city in disguise, not like Nero, for purposes of debauchery and cruelty, but to minister to the wants of his subjects, to relieve

their distresses, to light up their faces with unaccustomed smiles, and to enjoy in secret the cordial benedictions that are every where showered upon our dear young emperor! His ceaseless devotion to them, too, when that terrible three days' conflagration desolated the city, and, still more, when the accursed pestilence was upon us! What a description, that! Grander and more vivid, even, than that of Thucydides; at least, so it seems to me. And then that still more wonderful picture of the burning mountain,—

"Forth from whose nitrous caverns issuing, rise
Pure liquid fountains of tempestuous fire,
And veil in ruddy mists the noon-day skies,
While wrapt in smoke the eddying flames aspire,
Or gleaming through the night with hideous roar,
Far o'er the reddening main huge rocky fragments pour."

Magnificent as the poet's description is, are there not passages in the historian's narrative quite equal to it in graphic power and vigor of expression? How completely, indeed, is the whole scene, with all its attendant terrors and sufferings, brought before us! And then those inimitably terse reflections, half mournful, half sarcastic, on the buried cities, thus blotted for ever from the face of earth;

to say nothing of that grand fancy sketch which follows them, of imperial Rome herself overtaken by a similar catastrophe. That exquisitely beautiful speech, too, which is ascribed to the prince, as he offers his naked breast to the swords of the detected conspirators; and, above all, the inimitable death-scene; that most affecting farewell to his betrothed Cornelia, those parting words of forgiveness to Domitian, and that prayer for Rome's prosperity, left unfinished on his lips; is it not wonderfully rendered? I know not where to find its fellow, I must say, in Greek or Roman story.

You prefer the Annals, I believe. Well, I dare say, I should have expressed the same enthusiasm after reading them; and, indeed, whatever performance of this author I happen to take up last, appears to me his masterpiece; be it the Annals, or the History, or the Agricola, or the Germania, or the funeral orations, or the forensic arguments, or his charming reminiscences of dead and gone orators. I have often regretted, Lucius, that I were not five and twenty years older, for then I might have listened to the eloquence, and enjoyed the society, of this most wonderful Roman; to say

nothing of his munificent and all-accomplished friend, Pliny; nor do I recollect any thing in your dear father's conversation, with so much pleasure, as his anecdotes concerning them.

I had another long call, the other day, from our young friend Cassius. He is fuller of his new faith than ever. He brought some more of those same sacred volumes with him that have so bewitched him, and insisted upon my reading them. I have done so, and, I must say, with great interest, nay, delight. They profess to be a couple of letters, written by Paul the Cilician, and, as you may be aware, one of the most prominent advocates of this new religion, to some of his brother believers at Corinth, at their own request; and referring to doubts and dissensions among them, concerning which they are anxious for his explanations and advice. He certainly replies to them in a tone of authority, and as if fully conscious of his importance to the cause; but, at the same time, there is a hearty, affectionate tone, and a fervid zeal, pervading both letters, most fascinating. As literary performances, too, they are very striking. The Greek, to be sure, is not so pure or concise as

that of Thucydides, nor has it the splendor or copiousness of Plato; but there is a wonderful freshness and originality about the style, great energy and variety of expression, and a most rare faculty of illustration. One thing especially struck me, and that was the singular union of calm wisdom. with the most passionate outbursts of feeling. One moment, the writer is discussing some point of doctrine in the most tranquil, logical, ingenious way in the world; the very impersonation, in fact, of quiet good sense; the next, he is making the most burning appeals to the passions of his followers; and yet, the transition seems perfectly natural and graceful. Not the slightest trace of affectation could I discover from beginning to end; not a line written for effect, though the most startling effects are continually produced. This constant change of manner, now simply narrative, now didactic, now argumentative, now expostulatory, gives, of course, a corresponding variety and dramatic power to the language; for, while one of our writer's sentences will be as crisp and pithy as those of Epictetus, the very next, perhaps, will have all the sustained power and glow of the Protagoras itself. There

are passages, indeed, in both letters, quite obscure, and others, which I find altogether unintelligible; but perhaps Cassius will be able to explain them, when we meet. There are others, again, which deal with the details and mysteries of domestic life, in a manner not altogether suited to a Roman taste, and which seem to take for granted rather a low standard, both of moral and intellectual excellence in some of the parties addressed; still these are as nothing compared with those from which I have derived both delight and instruction. Two I remember with especial pleasure; one is in the first letter, wherein the writer sets forth the characteristics of true love, and the worthlessness of all other gifts and graces where this is wanting. is, indeed, a gem. The other, in the second letter, is a modest, but most touching narrative, of all the pains, perils, stripes, tortures, imprisonments, and hair-breadth escapes of the writer, while going about preaching the new religion. Wonderful is its truthfulness, its fervor, its pathos; nor do I envy the man who can read it without a glow of sympathy. Right or wrong, this Paul must have been a brilliant, glorious creature; aye, as genuine

a hero as any that adorns or Greek or Roman annals. I wish, my dear Lucius, you would gratify me by getting these same letters. If merely as literary compositions, I am sure you will be delighted with them, and will be convinced that I have not spoken of them in terms one whit too extravagant. You will find no difficulty in so doing, if indeed you have not already met with them; for Cassius tells me that there is quite a little band of the brethren, as he calls them, at Athens, who will be too happy to lend or transcribe their sacred volumes for any who may feel interested in them.

Don't be alarmed, my dear friend, I am not going to turn Christian; at any rate, not rashly, and without due investigation; but, as I have so often spoken to you, most freely, and, it may be, presumptuously, of this new faith, I could not, in conscience, withhold my humble tribute of admiration for the genius and goodness of one of its principal champions, as they are so abundantly manifested in these same epistles of his. And, after all, Lucius, may not our young friend be right? May not this same eloquent Paul have been, what he here so earnestly and constantly

calls himself, a genuine apostle, divinely accredited, and this Jesus whom he served, a veritable messenger from heaven? I confess I never felt so much disposed as now, to throw aside all prejudices, religious or philosophical, and calmly to examine the merits of this religion. If I should find, (as I fear, indeed,) an insuperable difficulty in believing the supernatural facts embodied in it, may I not at least discover there clearer conceptions of immortality, and better arguments for it, than any of the schools can give me? And if so, why hesitate to receive them, and govern my course accordingly? Why not? Who would not gladly hail any light from any quarter, Jew or Christian, Gothic or Indian, upon the blessed doctrine of the life to come? Any thing, any thing but materialism; the horrible notion, that all is over, for ever, when the blood no longer courses through these veins, and the last bubbles of air have passed through these lips! What heart can abide a thought so monstrous? What age or nation of earth ever could be brought to listen to it? No. no; the Gods are no such bunglers, life no such wretched farce as this. There must be an here-

We are not sent here to learn our letters merely, or, at most, to spell out a few brief monosyllables, while all the rest of the divine course is to be closed against us for ever. Where and how, indeed, the education here begun is to be carried on, what rewards and punishments are to be incident to it, what labors and sufferings, what glories and triumphs are to be embraced in it, and where it is to end at last, who, my friend, would not gladly have his conceptions on all these points enlarged and purified? Who would not gladly hear any new arguments concerning them, or new illustrations of old ones, if his faith in immortality might be thereby strengthened? Who would not receive with reverence, at least with respectful attention, any teacher who had aught to tell us about them, that might instruct or comfort us, no matter what his land or his lineage, no matter whether he brought his messages of love and wisdom from the most obscure hamlet of despised Judæa, or from the holy Capitol itself?

But not to dwell any longer on this subject, let me candidly confess to you, my dear friend, that I begin to feel as if there might be, in these same derided books of these scattered followers of Jesus, speculations on all these topics far more original, and profound, and just, than our prejudices have been willing to accord to them. At any rate, I am determined to give them a far more faithful and deliberate examination than I ever have before.

Ah, the sun is shining out at last, and I must go take my walk with Julia and the youngsters, as I promised. So no more to-day. The Gods love you all. Farewell.

XIV.

SERTORIUS TO VIRGINIUS.

MANY thanks, dear Lucius, for your and Valeria's letters, received through Chrysippus. We found them quite interesting, I assure you. You must, indeed, have had a right pleasant time of it at Corinth. Julia is becoming very envious, and says I must make up my mind for an Oriental tour with her next season, without fail. Poor thing, I fear she will be sadly disappointed. We were all delighted with Chrysippus, by the way; so much so, that even I, who am, you know, most unreasonably jealous of my time, and, at best, but a wretched cicerone, dedicated two entire days to showing him the lions of the town, including flying visits to many of the studios of our artist-friends. I am sorry that he is to remain so short a time with us, for I have found his conversation exceedingly entertaining, while his enthusiasm for his art is most delightful to behold. We have seen the pieces he has brought with him. The Phocion illustrations, we found, came quite up to Valeria's praises of them. The statue of Aristides I was especially charmed with, and think it will create a sensation. The Aspasia did not strike me so favorably. Not but what she looks lovely and intelligent, but there is not that irresistible grace and fascination about the figure, which the subject seems to call for. But oh, that glorious bust of Plato! I had but one regret, while looking at it; that I was not rich enough to buy it for dear Julia, who fell in love with it at first sight.

At Albinus's studio we saw several new pictures. I believe I spoke to you, in a former letter, of his Death of Octavia, an admirable performance, which was purchased, before it had been exhibited an hour, by our rich neighbor, Junius. Among the novelties, we particularly admired Alexander weeping over Darius, a noble picture, full of feeling, yet without exaggeration; an exquisite Hero and Leander; and, above all, an Acis and Galatea, a wonder of art. In this last, however, the lovers play but a subordinate part, the artist having ex-

pended his strength mainly upon the landscape. And such a landscape! Crowded with details, alike beautiful and faithfully elaborated. It was something quite new to me, I confess, this mode of handling the subject; and Chrysippus expressed the same opinion. Bear with me for a moment, while I venture to give you some idea of it. In the immediate foreground, we have the lovers, exchanging their caresses beneath a rustic bower, near the margin of the sea-shore. Hard by, upon the left, are two attendant nymphs, one reclining in her airy skiff, the other on the ground, her figure being seen between the trunks of two trees, that cross each other about midway from the top, forming a peculiar but very agreeable effect. Near the lovers, we see Cupid and his doves, who are likewise exchanging endearments, while the god is about to strike with his arrow, an impertinent intruder, who is attempting to disturb them. This, of course, playfully typifies the cruel interruption that our lovers' happiness is so soon to receive from the jealous Cyclops. Rare shells, and flowers, and foliage, pleasantly grouped, and most carefully painted, embellish this part of the picture.

upon the right, we see the stream, named after the luckless shepherd; its fretful waters finely contrasting with the placid sea, slumbering in the sun-On the opposite bank, at some distance, is Polyphemus, reclining on a green hill-side, playing on his pipe, with his flock browsing about him. Behind, is the black mouth of his cave, surmounted by steep rocks, erowned with noble, spreading trees. in every variety of position, some in deep shadow, some filled with golden light. Far above, and behind them, is seen the "snowy Ætna, nurse of endless frosts," with the group of burning hills at her feet, from the summits of two of which dense clouds of smoke are rising, while the vultures are wheeling round them, and darting in and out of them in all directions, as they gradually melt away in the serene atmosphere. Below, as we follow the coast, and hard by the hill of Polyphemus, is the beautiful caseade of the Symæthus, and beyond. the wooded promontory of Hybla, with the town above. The grand forms of the rocks, the profusion of superb trees, and the wonderful management of light and shade in this part of the picture. are beyond all praise. Farther on, and in the mid-

dle distance, we see Callipolis, with its quay, and pharos, and a cluster of vessels reposing beneath its towers, while another is just about entering the harbor. Still nearer the horizon, and with a flood of radiance poured over it, we behold an island, more beautiful even than Capreæ; and, at last, we have the blending of sea and sky, beneath the most magnificent of sunsets. The crowning glory of the picture is a bar of light, extending quite across it, even to the very base of the bower, where the enamored nymph and garlanded swain are reclining. As I followed its shimmering, tremulous line along the translucent waves, I almost fancied it a special benediction on the lovers from the parting day-god. The effect of the whole is indescribably fine. Two things struck me very forcibly, my friend, after gazing upon this most charming performance; one was the strange neglect of this branch of art by all the great Greek and Roman masters; for, with the exception of this very picture, and some half dozen by Scribonius, I have never seen or heard of a landscape worth mentioning, save in the way of scene-painting; and the other was the marvellous success achieved by Albinus at the very start. Such amazing versatility, as well as strength of genius! If I am not very much mistaken, a new era in our Art-history will date from the execution of this work. It has only been finished a few days, and the few persons who have seen it, Albinus says, hold the same opinion about it that Chrysippus and myself do.

We did not find Fabius at his studio, he not having yet returned from a tour in Spain, where he has been exhibiting his Capture of Jerusalem, but without any very brilliant success. One of his scholars, however, showed us several new sketches of his, and one large picture, nearly finished, which impressed us very much. The subject is Alexander's First Glimpse of the Indus; a far less showy, but far more effective piece than the Capture: like it, crowded with figures, the central group being, of course, Alexander and Bucephalus. horse and rider are masterpieces. The horse especially is done in a grand and pure style, being neither overloaded with superfluous finery, nor playing off any tricks of the circus, nor affecting any supernatural intelligence; while the expression and attitude of the young monarch are all

that could be desired. He looks, indeed, the very man himself; brilliant, reckless, imperious, fatedefying, and withal, a most unhappy and selfhating creature. The time of day selected by the artist is late in the afternoon, and the season late in autumn: hardly in accordance with the truth of history; and yet wisely chosen, I think, for effect; the temptation being thus removed, of filling either the sky or the landscape with splendors that would distract the eye and weaken the sentiment of the picture. Not that our artists, as I said before, have ever fallen much into such temptation; on the contrary, they have strangely neglected landscape; at the same time, it stands to reason, that the same treatment of the subject, which makes the Acis and Galatea so charming, would be utterly out of place in a work like this. Among the other figures, that of Hephæstion struck me as particularly noble and beautiful. The picture throughout, indeed, seemed to me a most decided advance upon all Fabius's previous efforts.

We looked in also at Calcnus's, and found him at work upon a nearly finished Antinous. This is the sixth, he says, that he has painted for the Emperor, and is entirely different from any of the others. It represents the favorite in the character of Bacchus; not the bearded conqueror of India, I hardly need say, but the voluptuous, effeminate Bacchus of Thebes—

"His golden tresses waving from his head, In ordered ringlets, of a roscate hue, The grace of love bright sparkling in his eyes; Awakening soft desirers; and his fair skin, Of cherished whiteness, that ne'er folt the touch Of the sun's beams, but nursed in sheltering shades, Aims with its beauty to enkindle love."

This dainty description of the poet is most faithfully transferred to the canvas; and though it is hardly a picture that a parent would call his child's attention to, or a philosopher love to see his pupil lingering over, it must be confessed that it is a most exquisite piece of work.

It being next door, we stopped in a moment to see some of those absurd polylithic figures by Camerinus, which, I am ashamed to say, are quite the rage at present. Prominent among the monsters was a colossal *Seneca*, and you can fancy how it must have looked when I tell you that the trunk was of porphyry, the legs of red marble, the

arms of Egyptian granite, the neck of alabaster, the head of Pentelic marble, with black marble eveballs and colored evebrows, while the hair and beard were drilled and painted to correspond. I really feared, for a moment, that Chrysippus was about to part company with his breakfast, so profound was the impression it made upon him. You were never, Lucius, I believe, a very ardent admirer of the philosopher; but surely, with all his affectations and vices, he never did any thing to deserve such harsh usage as this. He was in choice company, moreover, being surrounded by grotesque groups and figures of all sorts, some with colossal heads on pigmy bodies, some with frightfully exaggerated noses, and others, again, in the most scandalous and indecent attitudes. Such conceits are sufficiently displeasing in confectionery even : such indecencies are hardly to be tolerated in the very heyday of the Saturnalia; but to perpetuate them thus in stone, and to gain reputation and money too by such shameful perversions of one's abilities, it is really too bad. But so it is. This man is actually overrun with orders, and more than half our gardens and villas are already disfigured with his abominable productions.

It was, indeed, refreshing to escape from them, and find ourselves in the studio of Apollonius, and among the noble and beautiful creations with which it is filled. Nothing unseemly or ungraceful, I am sure, ever found shelter in our dear friend's imagination, much less, took form under his wonder-working fingers. The Corinna was, of course, the first thing Chrysippus asked about, and long did he feast his eyes upon it. The Vespasian, too, made a deep impression upon him. The Agricola, not long finished, I had never seen Some think it the artist's masterpiece. It is certainly a princely thing, both in expression and attitude; but there is quite too much finery about the cloak and the breastplate, according to my notions. A dandy general, like Otho or Verus, might have worn such ornaments, but they do not harmonize with our ideas of Agricola. Apollonius approved of my criticism; but the Germanicus, for which it was designed as a fellow, having been decorated in that way, he did not feel at liberty, he said, to vary from it. It is to be removed to the Palatine in a few days.

You will be gratified to hear that Apollonius

has lately received no less than three orders for a colossal statue of Cornelius Tacitus; one from Mediolanum, another from the good people of Comum, and the third from the University of Massilia. He showed us his design for the first of them, which is to be placed in the centre of a new and beautiful square, named after the historian. That for the university is to be of bronze with appropriate bas-reliefs upon the pediment. It will be a good while, however, he says, before any of them is finished. He is now hard at work, as you are aware, upon his splendid allegorical group, for the eastern pediment of the Athenæum.

I was unguarded enough the other day to promise Marcellina to take her to see the Panorama of the Nile, a moving picture, which Caius tells me has excited considerable stir amongst the youngsters here. It is a very showy affair, he says, about two miles long, and moves to the sound of flutes, stopping every now and then for the exhibitor (who must be a most eccentric character, if Caius's imitation of him is correct), to make the appropriate explanations. The dear child has just been in to remind me of the aforesaid promise, and in such a pathetic way, that I cannot put her off any longer. And so, my dear Lucius, I spare you any further criticisms for today. You shall hear from me soon again. Jove be with you. Farewell.

xv

VIRGINIUS TO SERTORIUS.

WE were right glad, my dear Marcus, to have Herodes once more in Athens, nor was he any the less welcome, for the pleasant tidings and missives that he brought from you all. He spoke with great emphasis of his agreeable visit to Rome, and of the marked success of his lectures. I hope he will be induced to repeat them here. I heard him only once before he left; his theme was the genius of Aristophanes. I was charmed with it then, but should be far more so now, since I have renewed my acquaintance with the writings of the immortal satirist. You are, of course, familiar with Herodes's history, his high birth, the wonderful care bestowed upon his education, and the princely fortune which his father has recently left him. His love of art, and liberality to artists, are already quite a proverb here, though he is only seven-and-twenty. No young man in Athens is so looked up to in all matters of taste and fashion; another Alcibiades, indeed, but without his vices. If he lives, he will make his mark in the world's annals, depend upon it.

Plutarch's course was concluded some days since. It has been a highly interesting and successful one. I missed only one lecture, and of that he was good enough to lend me the manuscript afterwards. There was but a single drawback; the old gentleman's voice failed him occasionally, making it rather difficult to catch the close of those long sentences, which he is so fond With that exception, all went off delightfully. The illustrative pictures and drawings were really superb, and added materially to the attractions of the course. The concluding lecture, on Alexandria, was somewhat different in its character from the rest, having less to do with antiquity, and abounding in all sorts of digressions and anecdotes. Among other things, he repeated some pleasant verses, by our first Cæsar, that were quite new to me, and some piquant witticisms of Cleopatra, at the expense of his successor. The latter part of

the lecture was pretty much made up of reminiscences of his residence at Alexandria, he having spent a couple of years at the academy there when young. And a most graphic and delightful picture it was of student life, interspersed with charmingly drawn portraits of some of the notable professors of those days.

Capital lecturer that he is, however, I think our dear old friend even more agreeable as a talker; which he abundantly demonstrated last evening, during a visit with which he honored us. For upwards of two hours, he poured out a steady stream of chat, to the great delight of Valeria, who, I believe I told you, is quite a pet of his. It consisted mainly of his travels and experiences in Italy in bygone years. He had a great many curious anecdotes to tell us about Vespasian, and his funny ways, and sharp repartees; about the mad pranks of Titus and Berenice before the young prince's reformation; about his precipitate departure from Rome, when Domitian persecuted the philosophers, and of his adventures on the road to Naples with his fellow-traveller Juvenal. He thought Juvenal one of the noblest specimens of

humanity he had ever encountered, and by all odds, the most vigorous and original writer of his day. He spoke too of the many pleasant little suppers he had had at Quintilian's, and the celebrities he had met there; among them Apollonius, the prophet, the most fascinating of story-tellers, and indefatigable of travellers, and Martial, the inexhaustible joker. And then the glorious tabletalk he had enjoyed at the hospitable board of Tacitus, where he had more than once reclined on the same couch with his princely father-in-law. Agricola was a man of few words, he added, but those wonderfully to the purpose, always. He then went on to tell us of his having been in the senate-house on the day when the younger Pliny made that magnificent speech of his in the case of the Africans against Priscus; and the next day, when Liberalis made his famous reply, and Tacitus replied to Liberalis. All three speeches struck him as consummate specimens of art, and the trial itself, by far the most imposing and interesting he had ever witnessed. The presence of the emperor, the high rank of the accused, the atrocious crimes with which he was charged, and the surpassing

eloquence of the speakers, all combined to imprint the scene indelibly upon his memory. But, above all, did the old gentleman dwell with satisfaction upon the interviews with which he had been honored, and the correspondence he had had with our beloved Trajan, that kindest, most genial, best of monarchs, as he called him. Some of those letters, he said, he valued beyond all his other manuscripts; not that they were, by any means, models of style, being quite carelessly written, but because they bore such emphatic testimony to the generosity and magnanimity of their author. He was about to say more on this point, but the trumpets of the Acropolis blowing eleven, he forthwith rose, and remarking that it was high time for octogenarians to be a-bed, took leave of us, stoutly refusing my services as an escort, and trotting off as briskly as a boy. Charming, charming old man! Valeria would gladly have had him talk on till cockcrow.

You must know that we had a grand musical demonstration here yesterday, it being Pindar's birthday. A splendid selection from his odes was chanted at the Odeum, in superb style, and before

a brilliant audience. I shall not undertake to give you any detailed account of it, for two reasons; first, because you may be sure that Valeria will send a glowing description to Julia; and secondly, because, dear lover of the art that I am, I am yet not sufficiently versed in its technicalities to do justice to the subject. All I can say is, that I was charmed with every single piece on the programme, and more emphatically so, with the introductory hymn to Apollo, as sung by fifty virgins, the Marathon march, with its wonderful crescendo and diminuendo passages, which created a perfect fever of enthusiasm in the audience, and grandest of all with that divine Olympian, which sings the praises of the victorious Theron. Of all the odes of the great master, that I have ever read or heard, this has impressed me most, both words and music. Not but what many may surpass it in profusion of sublime imagery, and in brilliant and difficult accompaniments; but the transitions in it are so artfully managed, the blending of the triumphant strains with the plaintive reflections so harmonious, that the effect is more dramatic. Oh, how charmingly that passage was rendered"Tis not given for man to know
When pale death shall strike the blow,
Nor c'en if one serener day,
The sun's brief child, shall pass away
Unclouded as it rose. The waves
Of life with ceaseless changes flow,
And, as the tempest sleeps or raves,
Bring triumph or disaster, weal or woe."

And then that exquisite accompaniment of the harps, in the famous description of the blessed in Elysium:

"Who by Jove's mysterious road
Pass to Saturn's realm of rest,
Happy isle that holds the blest;
Where sea-born breezes gently blow
O'er bloms of gold that round them glow,
Which Nature boon from stream or strand
or goodly tree profusely pours;
Whence pluck they many a fragrant band,
And braid their locks with never-fadine flowers."

I make no apology, Marcus, for transcribing these divine lines, familiar as they may be to you, and only regret that you and Julia could not have heard the delicious strains to which they were wedded. We Romans, my friend, can form but a faint notion from our musical performances at

home, of the finish, precision, purity, and thorough appreciation of all the ideas of the composer, that invariably characterize them here. And then the audience are so uniformly attentive and intelligent. Every man here, from the first Archon down to the humblest vine-dresser, seems to be a born critic; nothing harmonious, nothing beautiful is lost upon him. It is, indeed, mortifying to think how far we are behind our Greek brethren in these respects. How shamefully do we rattle over the prayers, how abominably do we sing the hymns in all our temples! In our theatres, too, how little sensibility or judgment do the performers manifest as they drawl out our drowsy tragedies! Our audiences, too (and that not only in the upper circles). how stupid, and noisy, and ill-bred are a vast majority of them! Whereas, of the ten thousand assembled vesterday, there was not one, apparently, that did not comprehend and sympathize with the exercises throughout. Such profound silence, such judicious applause, were alike novel and delightful to me; and this too, though the building was very much crowded, and many, of course, uncomfortable. We met Herodes as we were coming

out. He remarked, among other things, that the Odeum was altogether too small for the requirements of Athens; adding that he had just got a design from Craterus, the architect, for a much more spacious and elegant one, which he would like to show me. He is willing to pay half the expense, he says, of its erection, if his fellow-citizens will pay the other half. A right noble and characteristic offer, is it not?

I shall not fail to send you, as you requested, the drawings of the Pœcile frescoes. In fact, I purchased a complete set of them yesterday, being nearly a hundred in all, and at the rate of six denarii apiece, making altogether about twenty-four solidi; wonderfully cheap, considering how well done they are. You would have had to pay sevenfold that price for them in Rome. As to the glorious old originals, I need not tell what an endless source of delight they are to all travellers of taste; more especially now, that they have been so judiciously restored, under the auspices of the Emperor. On the whole, I take most pleasure in looking at those of Polygnotus. The artists, I am aware, have never ranked this master with Zeuxis

or Parrhasius; but there is something so graceful and spirited about his style that quite blinds me to all his faults. I do not refer so much to his Trojan pieces, charming as they are, as to those illustrative of his own times, such as the Pericles and his Friends, Cimon's Recall, etc. The first of these, I confess, is to me by far the most fascinating picture in the portico. I never walk by without giving a good long look at this familygathering of genius, this assemblage of the most brilliant creatures that ever came together, from the venerable Anaxagoras down to the boy Alcibiades; of the whole fifty figures, not one, my friend, that is not identified with some wonderful achievement in art, or letters, or statesmanship. Valeria sympathizes fully with my enthusiasm, but at the same time, thinks the picture far inferior to the artist's Iphigenia and his Flight of Helen, and says that it is not to be named in the same century with Zeuxis's Death of Socrates. This last is, indeed, a divine work, and, as you know, is universally considered the chef-d'œuvre of the portico. But the pictures here, which appeal most strongly to our pride as Romans, are, of

course, those which commemorate the residence of the illustrious Pomponius. There are four in the series, all well executed. The one I liked best was that in which he is represented as laying the corner-stone of the famous Cecropian Library: one of the finest collections, as you are aware, in the world, and one of the most beautiful buildings I have been there several times with Sempronius, and had no idea of the extent or variety of its treasures. Pomponius himself, it seems, made it the munificent present of five thousand volumes, including a superb edition of his own works. We have also been to the house and gardens which he occupied while here, and which he gave the Athenians as a parting gift. It is delightful to see the reverent care that has been taken of them, and the affectionate remembrance in which the donor is held. An admirable statue of Pomponius adorns the gardens, which are a favorite resort of children. Valeria, by the way, insists upon it, that the babies here are far lovelier than those that take their airing on the Esquiline.

I have spoken to you, more than once, of our

theatrical enjoyments here. They continue un-As a general rule, we prefer going on abated. those days when the old masters are rendered; for, though good tragedies, and sparkling comedies, are by no means obsolete in Athens, still, it is superfluous to say, that they are far, far behind the classics of the age of Pericles. Our last tragic treat was King Œdipus. It drew altogether the best house of the season. It was never known to draw a poor one, they say. No wonder; the magnificent scenery alone, ought to attract a crowd, however wretched the choruses, or vapid the dialogue might be. How could it be otherwise, then, when allied to poetry so exquisite, situations so affecting? And yet, with all the grace, and dignity, and pathos, that pervade this masterpiece, I confess, Marcus, I would far rather have been the author of the Choephoræ, or the Agamemnon. There is an intenseness of passion, a grandeur of imagery, in Æschylus, that I look for in vain else-Take these few lines, from the Choephoræ, for instance, where the chorus expresses its impatience for the vengeful sword to fall on the guilty mother and her paramour:

My honest hopes? Fate spreads her sable wings,
And hovers o'er their heads; before their eyes
Stands Indignation arm'd, and Hate enrag'd,
Ready to rend their hearts, when Jove shall stretch
His puissant hands."

Or that other terrible description of the wretchedness that follows, unto death, the unexpiated murderer:

"For the dark shafts that fly From those beneath, slain by the kindred hand Of villain baseness, frenzy, and vain fear That trembles at the shadows of the night, Rouse, sting, and drive the vice-polluted wretch With brazen socurges tortured through the city. He from the friendly bowl, the hallow'd goblet, The social intercourse, the incens'd altar is chased, condemned to bear the secret pangs Of inly-gnawing guilt: meanwhile the flends, Hatred and Infamy, pursue his steps, And drag him to an excerable death."

Where, in Sophocles, are we to look for passages so fervid, so concentrated as these? And, as for Euripides, copious and fanciful as he is, abounding in picturesque narratives, and moving scenes, yet how vastly inferior is he to Æschylus, in all the loftier qualities of the artist! And when I say this, I would not ungratefully forget the delight we have lately received, both from the Iphigenia in Aulis, and the Bacchæ.

We have seen a good many of the sterling old comedies also, including some of the choicest of Cratinus, and Aristophanes, and half a dozen of Menander: to wit, The Jealous Wife, The Fair Maid of Miletus, The Elder Brother, The Self-Tormentor, The Provoked Husband, and Wit without Money. We were delighted with them all, especially the last, which in airiness, elegance, smoothness of versification, and smartness of repartee, far surpasses any play I ever witnessed. And it reads even better than it acts. What a miracle of wit he was, to be sure, and how miserably tame is our Terence alongside of him, with all his elegance! I have taken pretty copious notes of these last six performances, in my journal, and intended. when I began, to transcribe a few of them for your edification; but, considering how many voluminous epistles I have inflicted upon you recently, I have concluded to be merciful.

I have no special news for you to-day. You

will be gratified to know that we continue to have good health, charming weather, and all sorts of pleasant excitements. And so, with our best loves to all friends, on all seven hills, Farewell.

XVI.

VALERIA TO JULIA.

TEN thousand thanks, dearest Julia, for your long letter of last Ides. You can't tell what a relief it was to us all. And so dear Marcellina has quite recovered, precious child. Oh, how happy I am ! Octavia, too, poor thing, has been quite distressed to think of her little cousin's sufferings. thankful we ought to be, that we have been so blessed with health. Will you believe it, Julia, not a single hour's sickness has any one of us had, since our arrival in Athens. Thanks to this delightful climate, to our pleasant occupations, and most genial surroundings! Not that the climate is absolute perfection, either. There are rainy days, and blustering ones occasionally. They are rare visitors, however; and, indeed, our friends all say that it has been a remarkably pleasant winter.

We have not been lionizing quite so vigorously

of late, though still finding abundant and most agreeable employment, both indoors and out. Our last treat, of a public nature, was a lecture by Herodes, the young, handsome, brilliant Herodes, the envy of all the beaux, the pet of all the belles of Athens. And then, such a glorious voice as he So sympathetic, and of such vast compass! I heard him sing an ode of Alcæus, at a little party, the other evening, and he positively struck gamma flat, without recourse to his falsetto. Think of Gamma flat; at least four notes that, Julia! higher than any Roman vocalist I ever heard. A fellow that can do that, coz, must be pretty old, and pretty ugly, not to win us poor girls' hearts. But to the lecture. His theme was Homer, and right gloriously did he discourse upon it. He combated, with great vigor, and to my perfect conviction, the notion that the Odyssey and the Iliad were the productions of different minds or eras. I will not undertake to give you his argument, or to show the summary way in which he disposed of all those differences of dialect, conflicting metaphors, allusions, and geographical descriptions, on which such notion has been founded. Suffice it to

say, that they all vanished into nothing before his triumphant demonstration that one and the same mighty genius pervaded both masterpieces. the course of it, he cited the following passage from our own great Roman critic, the brilliant and subtle Landorius : a passage which I remember hearing Marcus read, one evening, not long before we left Rome, 'I am sure you will forgive my repeating a sentence or two. "The Ulusses of the Iliad and Odyssea is not the same, but the Homer is. The Iliad is the fruit of deep reflection and various knowledge; the Odyssea, the marvellous result of a vivid and wild imagination. In the thirty years which I conceive to have intervened between the fanciful work and the graver, Homer had totally lost his pleasantries, Polyphemus could amuse him no longer; Circe lighted up in vain her fires of cedar-wood; Calypso had lost her charms; her maidens were mute around her; the Lestrigons lay asleep; the Syrens sang

> Come hither, O passer-by, come hither, O glory of the Achaians!

and the smooth waves quivered with the sound,

but the harp of the old man had no chord that vibrated." Charming, is it not? And it sounded even more charming, I think, in Herodes' beautiful translation. In the course of the lecture, he repeated several passages from both poems, and with a precision, grace, and feeling, truly admirable. His next discourse will be on Sophocles, my idol, as you know, of all the Greek poets. I anticipate a rare treat, I assure you.

There was quite a large gathering at Sempronius's conversazione last evening; including several of our Roman acquaintances. The very first person that I ran against was our foppish friend, Celer. He was more absurd than ever, more over-dressed, and over-perfumed. He was absent from Rome, he told me, on a slight pleasure tour, though precious little pleasure had he found, so far. Such roads, such inns! By two-headed Janus (his favorite oath), it was excruciating to think of! Athens, he, of course, found insufferably dull; no parks, no parades, no pantomime worth speaking of, no races worth turning one's head for. And then such crooked streets, and nasty, miserably furnished little shops! But,

above all, the cuisine; perfectly Thracian ! There were some clever artists in town, in other departments, but not the first ray of genius had he seen, in any cook, into whose cruel hands he had fallen ! And here he laid his hand upon his stomach, and sighed most pathetically. After duly condoling with the poor sufferer, I ventured to inquire how much farther east he proposed extending his travels. Not one parasang beyond Byzantium, he replied; nor so far, indeed, unless I find some decidedly presentable person going that way. But the idea of prolonging his exile from the metropolis another month, quite distressed him. And so the lisping fool prattled on, till I got quite out of patience, and turned my back upon him very abruptly. But, Julia, in thus running away from Scylla, your poor friend came plump upon Charybdis; videlicet, in the person of the long-limbed and long-winded Veturius. And pray, what brought him to Athens? Two things, he told me; first, he is purchasing manuscripts for the Atheneum; and secondly, he is collecting materials for the biographical portion of the Encyclopædia Romana. No sooner had the old gentleman communicated this information, than, without the slightest warning whatever, he proceeded to unfold his views concerning the Patavinity of Livy. The Patavinity of Livy! What a topic, to regale a lady with, at an evening party! Had I not remembered hearing your husband speak kindly of him, I should have laughed outright, I fear. For a good halfhour did he ring the changes upon it. Just as I began to spy the edge of the wood, up came Sempronius, and with a mischievous twinkle of the eye, inquired of the old bore what his opinions were concerning the authorship of Halcyon. Never did pike snap at worm more greedily, than did Veturius at this bone of contention among the antiquaries. His mind, he said, was fully made up on that point. Socrates, and Socrates alone, could have been the father of that immortal work; and, for this opinion, he was prepared to give the following ten reasons. First-but here Agrippina mercifully flew to the rescue, feigning an errand for me at the other end of the room; and so we beat a retreat, leaving the proconsul fast in the trap which he had set for me.

Notwithstanding these abatements, however,

we had a very pleasant evening. Our neighbor Demetria, of whom I have before spoken to you, sang some of Corinna's melodies, and a couple of songs of Sappho, accompanying herself on the harp. Never did her voice sound more sweetly. The accompaniment of the last song was exceedingly brilliant, with all the modern embellishments and variations; a composition, I believe, of her brother Ctesiphon, who is called the first lyrist in Athens. been studying a good deal lately, both in Corinna and in Sappho, and my admiration, especially for the latter, increases with every verse I learn. Agrippina prefers Corinna. Well, perhaps she is right. 'Twas but this very morning that I was reading those delicious verses of hers, to her native Tanagra, so charmingly translated by Landorius. What can be more exquisite than the concluding stanza?

"O let thy children lean aslant,
Against the tender mother's knee,
And gaze into her face, and want
To know what magic there can be
In words that urge some eyes to dance,
While others as in holy trance
Look up to heaven; be such my praise!
Why linger? I must haste, or lose the Delphic bays,"

Unless, indeed, it be the one immediately before it:—

"Sweetly, where cavern'd Direc flows,
Do white-armed maidens chant my lay,
Flapping the while with laurel-rose
The honey-gathering tribes away:
And sweetly, sweetly, Attick tongues
Lisp your Corima's early songs:
To her with feet more graceful come
The verses that have dwelt in kindred breasts at home."

'Very charming, certainly.' So said Lucius, who, I found, had been looking over my shoulder, for some time; 'but pretty thin brewage, after all, Valeria, alongside of Pindar.' The dear soul, you must know, has been quite crazy about Pindar ever since that birth-day celebration that I wrote you of. I could not contradict him, of course; but between ourselves, Julia, is not the divine bard almost too divine, too fond of the clouds, too uniformly sublime, too hard, in short, upon the wits and imaginations, at least, of us poor women? I think so. A little more love, and a little less majesty, would suit me better; and, indeed, I involuntarily put on a good thick shawl, whenever I venture on an ode of his: not knowing how high

I may go, or how long I may be absent from earth.

What a gem of a criticism, this last! Don't let Marcus see it, if you love me.

And so dear Plutarch has left us at last. Don't be alarmed; not for Elysium, but for Mantinea, where he is to repeat his Egyptian lectures. He looked in the morning he left. After expressing the wish that he should find us here on his return, he added, that in case the Gods had willed it otherwise, he had brought with him for our acceptance a slight token of his regard. And what was it, think you? Nothing less than the original manuscript of his life of Epaminondas; that most delightful of biographies, his universally recognized masterpiece. He was evidently pleased with the heartiness of our acknowledgments. the evening I got Lucius to read it aloud to us, when it sounded more charmingly than ever. The children were as mute as mice up to the very close. That simple fact, Julia, is it not worth pages of praise? Such a hero, indeed, might inspire the dullest writer. How the virtues and graces clustered about him! His patriotism, his intrepidity,

his truthfulness, his frugality, his sweetness of temper, his inexhaustible patience, how were all these qualities set off and irradiated by the rarest manly beauty, by wit, learning, judgment, sensibility! One hardly knows where else to look for such a combination of charms. What a picture, that, where the hero is described as singing nursery ballads to the babies, and frolicking with the boys and girls, on the very evening before the judges so unjustly deprived him of his command ! And then the way in which he received the sentence; such a perfect abnegation of self, such indomitable amiability; not an angry word or look escapes him, but the very next day we find him serving in the ranks of that army which he had so often led on to conquest. And so throughout, even to the magnificent consummation at Mantinea! How vividly is that last scene brought before us, those farewell words, that parting smile in the hour of victory; and then, how splendid that burst of enthusiasm with which the biographer concludes! Admirable, admirable performance! Who can doubt that it will live as long as Greece lives; that ages and ages hence fond parents will

be reading it to their children, and inculcating the lessons that it teaches in this blessed town!

Octavia was quite surprised and delighted vesterday by a present from a little Greek admirer of hers, a pair of Thessalian nightingales, and most sweet songsters they are. We are all in love with them already, and what is more, they seem to be quite as much charmed with Octavia's music as she with theirs. It is really funny to see the intelligent looks they exchange with each other as she runs her chromatics. She is making most gratifying progress, and sits to her harp, and plays her preludes like a veritable little Sappho. Her Greek, too, is coming on finely. She recited a hymn of Cleanthes this morning to Lucius, with so much propriety and feeling, that he was quite overcome. I am happy to say also that Publius is becoming more domestic in his habits. He has not been to a quail-fight, he says, or a horse-race, for more than ten days. He translates, too, with much more ease and accuracy than he did: though his geometry is rather too much embellished with caricatures, fish tails, etc., to please his teacher. Still, he is improving. He positively sat out the Prometheus Bound, the other day, evidently understanding a line here and there. I don't think he treated himself to more than two cat-naps throughout the entire performance. One thing I must say for him, he is a most good-natured and kind fellow. He brought me a sweet bunch of violets this merning, with a few anemones. They were most acceptable. To say truth, we are not so well off for flowers here as at home. However bountiful Minerva has been to her children in other respects, she has been rather sparing of her floral gifts. Nor are we overstocked with fruits. I confcss, we miss very much, at times, those luscious pears and golden melons that so light up our Roman markets, and those superb bouquets of ours. I miss those pleasant walks too, Julia, in the Zoological Gardens, that we were so fond of taking, and the aviaries, and that procession of peacocks, and those magnificent young tigers, but above all, our old pets, the gazelles. Still, these are trifling matters, compared with the ten thousand delights and attractions around us. Ah, if you were only here now, and Marcus, and the children, and our dear flamen, and one or two others, that we wot of, I should be perfectly, perfectly happy.

Bless me, what a rambling, slip-shod letter I have been writing you; hardly worth the courier's fee, I fear. And with such a spattering reed, too. Well, well, my dear, I must throw myself upon your mercy, while, in turn, I spare you any further inflictions for to-day. The Gods bless you all. Farewell.

XVII.

SERTORIUS TO VIRGINIUS.

I HAVE right good news for you, dear Lucius. A letter from the Emperor was read vesterday in the Senate, wherein, after briefly alluding to his distressing maladies and approaching dissolution, he recommends to them the excellent Antoninus, as his successor. I need not tell you, my friend, how this intelligence was received by them, nor of the universal expressions of approbation with which it has since been greeted throughout the city. I happened to be in the Forum this morning, when the nominee made his appearance there, and it was delightful to hear the hearty acclamations with which he was welcomed, and the words of modest dignity in which he responded to them. Indeed, no better man could have been found in all Rome for the succession, nor one, I believe, with fewer enemies. It was right difficult, it is said, to induce him to take this burden upon himself; but the repeated solicitations of the Emperor, and the importunities of his friends, carried the day at last. The Gods be thanked therefor! I confess, Lucius, I am quite overjoyed at the intelligence, and I feel as if all the dearest interests of the State were already placed on a securer basis in consequence. So unbounded is my confidence in the talent, and energy, and integrity of our noble friend, and in the wise and peaceful counsels that, I am sure, will direct his administration.

You will have heard, before this, of the death of the Empress. Poor thing, her troubles are all over at last, and that proud heart now rests in peace. All attempts at reconciliation between her and Hadrian were of no avail; nay, there are even rumors that her death was caused by violence. I cannot put any faith in them myself. It is possible, indeed, that the Emperor, in one of those fits of frenzy, with which he has been visited of late, maye have used expressions which some wretch about the court has been all too ready to pervert to his own mercenary ends; but that Hadrian, in his sober intervals, could ever have countenanced

such a crime, no man in Rome can believe it for a moment. Still there is a painful mystery about the matter. Meanwhile, all the women espouse her quarrel as heartily as when she lived, and seem never weary of singing her praises.

Poor Sabina! And yet, with all her virtues and her graces, there was a certain loftiness and hauteur about her, that gave offence at times. Even her famous letter to the Senate, filled as it is with noble sentiments, has somewhat too much of scorn in it, and an unforgiving tone in certain passages, that might better have been omitted. She was too high-spirited for her own happiness, and too much given to sarcasm withal. Julia herself, one of her most devoted champions, confesses as much. Yes, magnificent creature that she was, she was vet far inferior, in every respect, to our adored Plotina, that loveliest of all Roman women; that model wife and queen, about whom your dear mother used to get so enthusiastic; who, to all the beauty of a Poppæa, united a Cornelia's dignity, a Portia's tenderness. Thus prettily did she express herself concerning her, I remember, in the very last conversation I ever had with her.

You will have seen by the Acta, that, at the express request of the Empress, her funeral rites were of the simplest and most unostentatious character. Her ashes have since been conveyed to the old family tomb at Nola.

I called, as you requested, at Glabrio's. found the abstract of title, after some little rummaging, and I immediately took it over to Paulus. He thought your offer of ten solidi a foot quite liberal, considering that the lots in question are among the most eligible on the Cœlian. After concluding our arrangements we looked in at court a few moments. There was quite a ridiculous libel suit before the Prætor, which was commencing just as we entered, and which made a good deal of fun. It seems that one Pinarius has been writing and circulating an absurd pamphlet, entitled, A post mortem examination of the reputation of Quintus Furius, wherein said Furius is certainly made to cut a most unseemly figure. Plaintiff's counsel quoted very freely from it in the course of his speech, and some of the extracts were so supremely ludicrous that keeping order was quite out of the question. The portly Prætor himself

shook like a jelly repeatedly. Both the parties, Paulus tells me, are men of no character whatever, and have long been notorious in town for their abuse of each other. It would puzzle a Peloponnesian lawyer, he added, to decide which was the greater quack, swindler, or braggadocio of the two. The immediate motive, it seems, for putting forth the scurrilous pamphlet in question, was jealousy on the part of Pinarius, because of the immense success obtained by a certain cough candy with which Furius has recently enriched the metropolis: a success all the more disgusting to Pinarius, in consequence of the utter failure of a razor-strop to which his name was attached, in making a favorable impression upon the public. The document fully justifies its origin, being one of the most foulmouthed, and, at the same time, piquant affairs that I ever listened to. As an exposure of the machinery of quackery, however, it is not without its lessons. The unblushing impudence with which these varlets put the names of our most illustrious citizens to their vile and mendacious certificates, is perfectly outrageous. If one tenth part of the statements here embodied be true (and nine

tenths probably are), I do not see how Furius can expect a single sesterce, in the way of damages. On the contrary, both plaintiff and defendant, had they received their deserts, would have been at Alba long ago, dressing stone for the government.

You will be gratified to learn that our young friend Fidenas acquitted himself very handsomely in a recent will case before the Centumvirs. Paulus says that it was one of the most promising débuts that he has witnessed for years. Ah, dear, I wish I had any such good news to tell you about Caius; but no, he seems to have no enthusiasm whatever for his profession. He even talks of leaving it and turning soldier. I am right sorry, for he is a downright amiable and intelligent fellow, and a great favorite with Julia withal. It will probably end in my buying a commission for him, for I see no prospect of his ever winning any laurels as an advocate.

The most interesting item in the book-world, just at present, is the recent removal of the Fratres Apollonii from their old stand to magnificent new apartments, at the intersection of Via Lata and Via Leonardina. The proprietors took

me through them the other day, and I was indeed surprised both at their extent and splendor. addition to their vast collection of Roman manuscripts, they have chambers set apart, respectively, for their Alexandrine, Byzantine, Pergamene, Athenian, and Massilian importations, which are duly arrayed in airy and well-lighted alcoves, with separate catalogues for each. Each chamber is adorned with appropriate frescoes, and provided with comfortable couches. Their transcribing. painting, polishing, illuminating, and binding rooms are all models of order and neatness. They furnish constant employment for upwards of two hundred men and youths. Their illuminated works, as you are well aware, are famous through-Their collection of bosses is truly out the empire. superb: the best artists in Rome having furnished the designs for many of them. Their last publication is Pausanias's Six Months in Egypt, which came out yesterday. From a cursory glance at it, I should infer that it was a more agreeably written and entertaining work than his Travels in Greece. To-morrow they bring out the third volume of Sempronius's Political Reminiscences,

extending down to the close of the reign of Trajan. I anticipate a great treat. If Sempronius could only abate somewhat that arrogance and pomposity of his, he would be among the most charming, as he certainly is among the most instructive writers of the day. Our friends are also hard at work on a new edition of Strabo's Geography. They seem to consider it a pretty doubtful experiment, however. It will be a great shame if it does not sell well. I have often wondered at our strange neglect of this writer. A work of such research, accuracy, candor, and sterling good sense, ought to have found its way, long ago, to the ends of the earth. I can't help thinking that posterity will set a far higher value upon his labors than we Romans have vet done. In our friends' lists of forthcoming publications, I also notice new editions of nearly all the great bards of the Augustan age, a diamond version of the Beauties of Cicero, and an illuminated edition of Pliny's Panegyric. You will be pleased to hear that their Homes of Roman Poets has achieved a brilliant success, nearly five thousand copies having been already disposed of; an immense sale for so costly a work Their Homes of

Roman Orators will probably be ready against next Saturnalia, and will be even more sumptuous than its predecessor. I was gratified at seeing your Prænestine villa so conspicuous among the illustrations.

But if this epistle is to go by to-day's courier, I must close it forthwith. The Gods love you all. Farewell.

XVIII

JULIA TO VALERIA.

Your lively letter, dear Valeria, by the Euphrosyne, was received some days since. I am happy to say that it found us all well. Little Rufus has been on the sick list for a day or two, but is quite smart again; and, as to Marcellina, if you had seen the way in which she made the figs disappear at lunch this morning, you would have had no doubts as to the thoroughness of her recovery. What do you think, the little hussy asked me just now? 'Mother, when Jupiter created man, do you suppose he made drawings of him first, or Did you ever hear any thing so saucy and how?' irreverent? Her uncle Caius put her up to it, of Poor Caius, do you know that he actually talks of leaving us, and going off to the wars. hates the law, he says, can't bear the sight of the court-house, and never takes up a law-book without being sound as a roach within a minute. Marcus is rather disposed to humor him. A few months' hard service in Caledonia, among the savages, he thinks, would effectually cure him of his military mania, and then he would come home, and go to work in right earnest. I shall be very sorry to lose him, Valeria, for I can't help loving the youth, with all his indiscretions.

Who do you suppose is making us a visit? Who but our little country cousin, Cleelia? What, of Lanuvium? The same; and a sweet, pretty thing she is, too. She is hardly ten yet, and this is her first visit to the metropolis. The poor child is, of course, quite overwhelmed, and her questions and her astonishment afford us all abundant amusement. Not that she is at all deficient in intelligence; on the contrary, she is as bright as a button. I was quite surprised to find her so well read in history; in geography, too, she answered several questions, that completely nonplussed the other children. Marcus was quite captivated with her fresh, enthusiastic ways, and none the less so with her industrious habits, which he seemed to think some of her young city friends would do well to

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imitate. We took her out to the Imperial Villa yesterday. Oh, how the young thing enjoyed it! On the whole, I think the monkeys made the deepest impression on her; even more than your favorite gazelles. And, indeed, it is a charming sight to behold these young natives of the forest, living so happily together, in their wire lodgings. Only think of it; five thousand monkeys assembling daily, at high noon, in obedience to the keeper's whistle, taking their places on their perches with such promptness and decorum, and there placidly awaiting the customary distribution of the cakes and the hickory nuts. What a picture of peace and order is here! And then how pleasantly they chatter over their victuals! How playfully they pelt each other with the shells! The subsequent sports and gymnastic exercises, too, how charming are they! Fun without rudeness, vivacity without turbulence, a relishing sense of life's pleasures, without that accursed selfishness and ill-humor. that so mar the social intercourse of us poor sons and daughters of men! Ah, Valeria, why will we not take a lesson from these creatures? Why cannot we human beings come together in such

numbers, and live thus delightfully under the same roof-tree? What is there impracticable about it? Ought we not, my dear friend, to make one grand, hearty, and harmonious effort, the world over, for a consummation so glorious? I used to think otherwise, I confess, and to look upon our philanthropic and socialistic brethren of the metropolis as the veriest dreamers; I must own, however, that the impressive picture of monkey felicity, that I gazed on yesterday, has given a new impulse to my reflections. But, as usual, my dear, I am moralizing, when I ought to be giving you news.

I know no part of your letters that makes me more envious than your glowing descriptions of the musical enjoyments of Athens. We are suffering the accustomed dearth here. To be sure, the Palatine band plays every other evening, in the gardens of the Esquiline, and there is an occasional service at the Temple of Apollo, and even at the Temple of Vesta, worth listening to; but, with these exceptions, starvation is the order of the day. As to the bag-pipers and ballad-singers that infest our streets, I never could abide them. Confound it, just as I mention them, one of the wretches has

come within ear-shot, and my reed is dancing to his vile music already. I am wicked enough, I confess, to wish some irritable old bachelor would put an arrow through him on the spot. This reminds me, by the way, that Marcellina has never acknowledged the receipt of those songs Octavia sent her. She was quite charmed with them; but the Greek fingering in the accompaniments bothered her a good deal at first.

Marcus brought me home a book, the other day, which I must tell you about, so deep an impression it made upon me. It is called Litera Rubra, and is written by Albaspinus, a cousin, I believe, of Lucius's friend, the Ædile. It has not been out many days, and I hardly think has found its way to Athens yet. The scene is laid at Rome, in the time of Numa, and the principal characters are a young flamen, who is described as a person of rare intellect and sensibility, having a marvellous reputation withal for sanctity in the community, and who yet, in the heat of passion, has been guilty of adultery with a young woman of Tarentum, whose husband, intending to remove to Rome, had sent her there before him, himself having been

afterwards detained in Campania; the unfortunate woman; a child, the offspring of her guilt, a bright, beautiful, but most wayward and strange creature, that puzzles even more than she fascinates, all who come in contact with her; and the injured husband, who is a physician, well stricken in years, and somewhat deformed, but of a deep and subtle nature, profoundly read in all the mysteries of his craft, and animated, moreover, by a malice that never slumbers, a thirst for vengeance that no tortures of his victim can appease. These are the main persons of the drama, though there are several subordinate ones, and all drawn with great felicity. The book derives its name from the red letter, which the College of the Vestals has condemned the guilty woman to wear for life, embroidered on her bosom, as the badge of her shame, To this harsh sentence she submits, with far more pride than penitence, but with a noble devotion to her lover, that enlists all our sympathies; heroically confronting, as she does, long years of misery and degradation, so his fair fame may remain unspotted; a beautiful loyalty, which at once disarms all criticism upon her. He, poor man, mean-

while, suffers the keenest tortures. Refined, sensitive, delicately organized creature that he is, unable to bear the burden of a holiness so falsely ascribed to him, yet without courage to disclose his guilty secret, false pride is continually silencing the importunities of conscience, and thus, for years, is a cruel warfare waged within him, poisoning all his joys, making a mock at all his labors and devotions, and from which, at last, death is his only In the mean time, he has been beguiling his soul with all manner of self-inflicted sufferings, stripes, vigils, fastings, every thing, in short, but that true, out-speaking penitence, that alone can give him peace. Among these acts of self-humiliation, he has painted upon his breast the counterfeit presentment of that scarlet badge, which the partner of his guilt has been condemned to wear. This witness to his crime, in an unguarded hour, falls beneath the gaze of the crafty old physician, whose suspicions had before been dimly pointed towards his patient, and who greets with fiendish rapture, the light that now flashes conviction upon him. His is no vulgar, short-lived vengeance. He invokes no aid from the laws. He plunges no

weapon in his victim; no; but the great motive and joy of his life, henceforward, will be to dog his enemy, by night and by day, to gloat, unsuspected. over his anguish; with subtle, hellish malice, to feed the flame that is consuming him, and, by his accursed skill, to keep him alike from that grave which would release, and that repentance which would console him. And, for seven long years, does the wretched old man play this fiendish game. But I will not go into any further detail, having, I trust, already sufficiently aroused your curiosity. In the treatment of these three characters, consists the great power and interest of the book : the masterly way in which the secrets of these wretched, guilty hearts are laid bare. Such a thorough exploration of all the tortuous passages and inner chambers of our nature, I have never before met with: nor is this analysis, searching and rigorous though it be, conducted in any spirit of bitterness or sarcasm. On the contrary, the author portrays the beautiful and good with the same power and felicity with which he shows up their opposites. He has, moreover, a wonderful eye for nature, and a fancy that sparkles on almost every page; while

Virgil himself is not more choice in his diction. Marcus is wonderfully taken with the book, which he thinks is quite unlike, in many respects, any thing he has seen in Roman literature. Some of the passages, he added, reminded him, in their terrible vigor, of the high-wrought scenes of Æschylus. But, I dare say, he has written Lucius all about it.

This is a short letter, coz, but my eyes are aweary, and I fear your patience also. And so, with best love to your husband and the dear children, Farewell.

XIX.

SERTORIUS TO VIRGINIUS.

I RECEIVED a long letter this morning from Labeo. at Baiæ. In it he says, "The Emperor has been more tranquil for the last few days, and comparatively free from pain. Not a word of encouragement, however, do his physicians give us, and he himself evidently looks forward to a speedy termination of his career. I had the honor of an interview with him yesterday. I was surprised to find him so placid, and his voice so strong. I expected to have stayed but a moment, especially as he had just been receiving the Parthian ambassadors; but he insisted on my remaining, and we chatted together for nearly an hour. The immediate object, he said, of his sending for me, had reference to the collection and publication of his poetical works; to be sure, fame seemed a thing of little consequence to him now; and yet he owned to a

paternal fondness for some of his poetry, which he thought, indeed, gave far more evidences of genius than either his orations or his historical papers; that he had long intended to collect the fugitives. and present them to the public libraries of the empire; that his confidence in my taste and judgment had now induced him to intrust this task to me, and that he relied upon my loyal zeal for its appropriate performance. After giving me several minute instructions on this point, he proceeded to speak upon a variety of topics, as they occurred to him, and in his usual half playful, half sarcastic style. On the whole, he thought his life had been a pretty pleasant one, notwithstanding all his cares and trials; that he had certainly tried to do some good in his day, and that a good deal of the evil he had done ought fairly to be attributed to dyspensy, and to that infernal dropsy that had, of late, so tormented him; that he had no doubt the Powers above would take this broad and generous view of his case, and so deal gently with him. He most sincerely trusted that the Senate would not be induced by any slanderous statements of his enemies, either to break his will or to pretermit

the accustomed apotheosis. He would willingly have lived a few years longer, he added, for the sake of carrying out many improvements, which he had meditated, both in Italy and in the provinces; among other things, he had intended to rebuild Herculaneum and Pompeii; that most fertile and beautiful part of the empire had been quite too long abandoned to desolation; more than half a century had now elapsed since the terrible catastrophe that had overwhelmed these cities, and ages might roll by ere its repetition. It was high time to pluck up courage, then, and to restore its former life and gavety to this lovely region. Afterdwelling with considerable animation on this point, he next spoke of Athens, complimenting Sempronius highly on the fidelity of his services, and his zeal for Art. There, at least, he added, if in no other part of my dominions, will my memory be cherished, there will the monuments of my munificence be admired by future generations. He then became more gay, again. He laughingly alluded to a new mineral spring that had been recently discovered in the neighborhood of Antium, of the absurd flourish of trumpets with which it had been

announced, and of the owl-like solemnity of the doctors whom he had sent to examine it, as they reported upon its merits. How much longer he would have talked I know not; but at that very moment the chief of those same learned owls, Craterus, entered, and respectfully intimated to the Emperor that he was disobeying orders, and that he must go to sleep forthwith. Whereupon I retired immediately."

Labeo goes on to say, "Antoninus has been here for the last fortnight, and will probably remain till the closing scene. What a model of a Roman he is! So intelligent, so dignified, so straight-forward! He has his enemies here, to be sure. Caninius would put a dagger in him to-day, if he dared, so furious is he at not getting the nomination. Our dandy friend, Pulcher, too, is frightfully severe upon the simplicity of his dress and manners. The wit-snappers of the court, of course, cannot abide a man who deals so little in superfluous epithets; nor do the tille profligates who infest it feel comfortable in the presence of one who is so particular in his accounts, and who keeps his appointments to the very turn of the

water glass. But, oh, Marcus, what a blessed thing for Rome, that her destinies are about to be intrusted to such hands; to one who unites to such sterling qualities, so large an experience in public life. I can't help feeling that there is a long and glorious career before him."

I have quoted Labeo thus freely, thinking that his remarks would interest you more than any thing I could write. The subject of them, I need not say, is the all-absorbing topic of the town. So far as I can gather, there is an almost universal feeling of satisfaction at the approaching succession of Antoninus. As the best evidence of which, stocks, real estate, and, indeed, every description of property, has advanced materially since his nomination was proclaimed.

I wish you could have been here half an hour ago. You would have had a right hearty laugh at my expense, I assure you. You must know, that a poor, starving artist in the neighborhood has been bothering me for the last three months to sit for my portrait. He only wanted one sitting, he said, and he was confident I would be quite satisfied with the picture. To silence his

importunities, I, in an evil hour, consented, and accordingly went to his studio, the other day, accompanied by Marcellina. It occurred to me, that, as I was fairly in for it, I might as well have her smiling face alongside of my solemn one; intending the group as an agreeable surprise for Julia. The fruit of the artist's labors has just been sent home, and of all abominable outrages upon humanity, it certainly takes the lead. can't imagine what a miserable, silly, leering, drunken vagabond I am transformed into. cellina is possibly a trifle less injured; still a most horrid looking fright. Had it been the Helen of Zeuxis, however, the artist could not have made more enthusiastic gestures over his performance. But, oh, you should have seen Julia's reception of the masterpiece! She with difficulty restrained her feelings till the artist left. The idea that she would give house-room to such an atrocious perpetration, or that I should allow myself to be taken in by such an unprincipled scoundrel, it was really too bad; a wretch like this presume to paint portraits? Why, he wasn't even fit to take the likeness of an uncut watermelon. Ah, dear, it was a most ridiculous scene, certainly.

We had another agreeable visit at Arrian's last evening. He read me some extracts from a letter he had lately received from his brother, at Corinth. Among other things, he speaks of a recent visit to Athens, and of a very pleasant soirce at your house. His Life of Epictetus is just out. I have read the first two chapters, and am even more delighted than I anticipated. But the courier waits, and moreover, it is almost supper-time; and so, dear Lucius, I postpone any further criticisms till my next. The Gods bless you all. Farewell.

XX.

SERTORIUS TO VIRGINIUS.

ALL is over, my friend. The Emperor died on the morning of the 16th Kalends, a little before sunrise. The news reached us yesterday. I had a short letter from Labeo, simply announcing the fact, but have since read a long and graphic account of his death, in one from Antoninus to our friend Priscus. With his permission, I make an extract or two.

"For the last forty-eight hours of his life, I was almost uninterruptedly in the Emperor's chamber. Such seemed to be his wish, so far, indeed, as we could interpret it; for, to say truth, our poor friend was by no means in a rational frame of mind. The last day, especially, was one continual alternation of stupor and delirium. He manifested no desire for nourishment of any sort, nor were the physicians at all disposed to force it upon him. It was

a strange scene, Priscus, and, I must say, a very painful one to me. Occasionally, indeed, there would be a pleasant smile upon the Emperor's face, and he would commence a remark to one of us, in that vein of mingled playfulness and gravity, which was so characteristic of him; when suddenly, the light faded from his countenance, and the sentence, thus agreeably begun, would die on his lips unfinished, or else be transformed into the veriest babble conceivable. He would persist in calling me his beloved Verus; as obstinately confounding Craterus with poor Antinous. Thus he said to me, as I was sitting by him, 'It isn't often that we crowned heads die in our beds, eh, Lucius, my boy?' And ere I could speak, or even nod my acquiescence, he would relapse again into a halfconscious state. At another time, after he had remained in this stupor for nearly an hour, he suddenly rose in his bed, and with eyes rolling wildly, and in a loud voice, cried, 'The Dacians, the Da-Up, guards, and at them!' evidently wandering back to his young days, when, with his Prætorians, he won such laurels, under our adored Trajan. Presently, sinking back, exhausted, he

was once more tranquil. Afterwards, a painful expression stole over his countenance, and he uttered the word Sabina more than once, and in a low, sad tone; a tender, and must we say, a remorseful recollection of his wife, and her unhappy end, weighing heavily upon him. This mood was short-lived as the rest, however; for, soon after, he called for the Phædrus of Plato, manifesting the greatest impatience till the volume was brought; and yet Craterus had hardly read a passage in it, when the Emperor burst forth into a perfect torrent of invectives against his physicians. Quacks, quacks; he repeated the word twenty times at least; adding, at the close, in a way which, notwithstanding the painfulness of the scene, made it difficult for me to preserve my gravity, 'I die, doctor-killed.' Not long after, he beckoned me to his bedside, and said something in reference to the erection of a temple to Apollo, but whether at Antium or Ancona I could not possibly make out; and, indeed, before the sentence was finished, the poor soul was far away again, and humming a lively Greek air, heaven only knows what : some pleasant Athenian recollection, perhaps, or the fragment of some Corinthian serenade in days gone by. Then his thoughts wandered to Judea. What epithets of contempt and infamy did he heap upon its devoted inhabitants! I must not repeat them, my friend. Among the very last words that he uttered, was an epigram of his own composing, which he recited with wonderful animation and taste; snapping his fingers, as he finished it, and saying, 'There, my lads, find me any thing in Martial to beat that, if you can,' And so on, even to the close. But I have told you quite enough, Priscus, to show you the wild, unhappy way in which our friend took leave of life. Perhaps I had better not have repeated these things; but heaven knows, I do not quote them in any spirit of levity. Ah no; for though the vulgar may laugh at them, though they may furnish occasion for the sneers of skeptics, surely they are not without their instruction and warning for us of thoughtful minds. Painful and inscrutable, indeed, are the dispensations of the Gods! Oh. ye blessed Powers, spare me, I beseech you, the infliction of a death like this. Bless my last days on earth with peace, with faculties unclouded, a

conscience unaccusing, a patient submission to your decrees. Oh, grant me that best of consolations, the memory of a good, a useful life, to sustain me in my hour of trial!"

In another passage, Antoninus says: "There was a fine expression upon the Emperor's countenance after death. It quite recalled former days, when he used to preside with such dignity in the Senate, or give audience to the ambassadors at the Capitol; and surely his face, when unstained with passion, and lighted up with intelligence, as it was on those occasions, was one of the handsomest and most majestic Rome ever looked upon. I was so agreeably impressed, indeed, that I got Pamphilus to make a drawing from it. He has succeeded admirably, and I am sure you will value it as a pleasant memorial of our departed friend."

I would gladly have copied Antoninus's letter entire, but there were other friends to whom Priscus was auxious to show it.

Since writing the above, our new Emperor has arrived, and to-morrow the Senate are to take the oath of allegiance. After which, a day will be fixed upon for the funeral services. It will be, unquestionably, the most splendid and imposing ceremonial that Rome ever witnessed. The oration, they say, will be intrusted to Priscus. If so, who can doubt that he will acquit himself most handsomely? Indeed, I know no man in town so well fitted for the task, both by his exquisite tact and his winning eloquence. With what gentleness and delicacy will he touch upon those dark, unhappy passages of the Emperor's career, that may not be passed by in silence; with what words of power will he set forth those princely traits that so adorned him! How far, indeed, the sober voice of the historian may adopt the shining sentences of the orator, is another question; but, surely, the bitterest enemy of Hadrian cannot deny the many right royal attributes of his character, or the manifold and signal services that he has rendered Rome. You of the legal profession, Lucius, must surely ever cherish his memory, for his wise edicts, his salutary reforms, his uniformly prompt and equitable administration of justice. We scholars, too (if I may so call myself), though the Emperor may have unnecessarily wounded our vanity at times, must, in the main, acknowledge the substantial benefits that he has conferred, both by his writings and his endowments, upon the cause of learning. And the artists, when did they ever find such a patron on earth before? What other prince is to be named in the same breath with him, for munificence, in this regard? When we think, indeed, of the innumerable pictures and statues that his kindness has called into being in every city of the empire; of the temples, theatres, academies, gymnasia, baths, porticoes, arches, with which he has every where enriched and adorned his dominions, are we not at a loss, my friend, to find words for our admiration and delight? Truly. the man that has done all these things may be pardoned for being somewhat costly and capricious about the embellishments of his final restingplace!

I have just received a few gracious lines from Antoninus, wherein he inquires of me, as your friend, what your feelings may be as to retaining your present position at Athens; for, if agreeable, he would be pleased to have you remain there. I annex a copy of my reply, which, I trust, you will not disapprove of. You will, doubtless, receive a

communication from him on the subject, at the same time that you get this.

But, as I shall probably write you again tomorrow or next day, I will not now trespass any farther on your patience. The Gods ever keep and bless you all. Farewell.



THE END.

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